GEM

THE BIBLE

IN THE

WORLD OF TODAY

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FOREWORD

Books regarding the Bible are many and various. The only valid excuse for the appearance of another is that it presents material nowhere else available in collected form and that it seems to answer a real need. This volume is prepared especially for use in connection with the Men and Religion Movement in North America, but it is believed that it will find a yet wider usefulness.

The first chapter makes no attempt at the suggestion or solution of critical questions concerning the text of Scripture. Its aim is to put in vivid and readable form such information as will be interesting and useful to the average man. Use has been made of material from a multitude of works concerning the making of the Bible, such as, How We Got Our Bible, and The Old Documents and the New Bible, by J. Paterson Smyth, LL.D., of Trinity College, Dublin, published by Samuel Bagster and Sons; The History of the English Bible, by T. Harwood Pattison, D.D., published by the American Baptist Publication Society; and The Bible — Its Origin and Nature, by Marcus Dods, D.D.

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The other chapters in the book have appeared under the Association Press imprint in various forms, but are now assembled in whole or in part, that they may be more easily within the reach of all.

That minds may be informed and quickened, faith strengthened and genuine Christian character established in those to whom this volume shall come, is our hope and prayer.

CLARENCE A. BARBOUR

NEW YORK CITY,
September first, 1911.

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THE BIBLE

IN

THE WORLD OF TODAY

I

How We Got Our Bible

CLARENCE A. BARBOUR

Upon whatever questions believers in the living and true God differ, they are alike in their allegiance, real or professed, to a book which we call the Bible, or *the* Book. Even for those who do not accept its teachings, it is *the* Book, for no other book has such a history. In its collected form, practically as we have it today, it has existed for nearly eighteen hundred years, while some portions of it go back into far greater remoteness of time.

It is hardly necessary to oppose the idea which has been held by some, that our Bible, with cover and clasp complete, has, as it were, been dropped down from heaven, like the image of the goddess Diana in Ephesus of old; or to oppose the idea that the Bible is too sacred a book to be subjected to critical inquiry. Yet the Revised Version of the Bible actually met with strenuous opposition, on the ground that a new book was attempting to supersede the venerable volume which in the course of the years had come to be regarded by some as, word for word and punctuation point

for punctuation point, the veritable written revelation of God. It is not necessary to combat any such conception.

God's Various Revelations of Himself.

God has many ways of revealing Himself. There is some revelation of Him in nature. I am sorry for one who does not find God in the sea, whether it lies gently breathing, like a maiden asleep, under the summer sun and zephyr, or whether its giant billows, in spume of spray and thunder-crash of power, hurl themselves on rocky cliffs. There is hardly a place in the world where one feels in such close communion with God as when, at sea, the plain of the ocean meets the dome of the sky in unbroken circle, with nothing to mar the infinite beauty of it all. He is an object for pity who can see nothing of God in mountain, in forest, in lake and stream. But our finding of God in nature is largely our reading of God into nature. We cannot separate ourselves now from that vastly broader and deeper revelation of Himself that He has given. We see Him in nature so plainly because we have long walked in the brighter light of His other revelations of Himself.

On the fields of Bethlehem long ago there was a wondrous vision which came to shepherds abiding in the field. The Word had come, the Word which had been in the beginning with God, the Word which was God Himself. His life was

to be the light of men, shining in the darkness, to give to men knowledge of Him who was and is the Light.

But we do not see that Word, as they saw Him of old who walked in the roads and lanes of Palestine. The Word, the Lord Christ, went from the earth in His bodily presence and is with us no more. The revelation of God which we have in visible form is the written Word, through which, in the main, is given to us the expression of the will of God for our instruction and our guidance. Whence came this Bible of ours, as now found in the Revised Version, bearing date of May 5, 1885, when the complete Revision was put into the hands of the people?

The original manuscripts are lost. The church in the early days after Christ had these. What we call the Epistles of the apostle Paul were actually letters, written letters, sent to the churches and read. The four Gospels were actual historical treatises, written and read. Doubtless for some time after the death of Christ His teaching and life were orally transmitted from mouth to ear, but the time came when they must be preserved in more permanent form, and the Gospels were written. The early church had manuscripts of the Hebrew rolls of the Old Testament, including the translation called the Septuagint, or version of the Seventy, called such from an old tradition of its having been prepared by seventy learned Jews of Alexandria. That ver-

sion was in Greek, Greek being the language most widely known at the time. That version, dating from about 280 years before Christ, was ordinarily used by the evangelists and the apostles, and doubtless Jesus Himself had access to the Septuagint. These writings of course were all in manuscript, written by hand. When copies were needed, each had to be written out, letter by letter, at great expense of time and trouble.

Versions of the Bible, in whole or in part, began to be soon after the year 200 A. D., save only the Septuagint, which, as has already been said, goes back more than four hundred years more. Upon the Latin, the Syriac, the Egyptian, the Gothic, and other versions we must not now pause.

Of the Vulgate, the Latin Bible, which for more than a thousand years was the basis of the Scriptures of Western Europe and of the Rhemish and Douay versions of the Bible, which are now used in the Roman Catholic Church, we will later speak at some length.

The Bibles which immediately preceded the Authorized Version are based both upon the Vulgate and upon the existing Greek manuscripts which had been lately discovered and to which St. Jerome had not access. The Revised Version had not only the use of the Vulgate, together with all the translations which had been made from it, but it had existing and more lately discovered manuscripts, in Hebrew and in Greek,

one of the most important of which — the Sinaitic manuscript — had been fully brought to light within sixty years. Moreover, the scholars of these later days are much better able to grapple with the difficulties and to interpret the shades of meaning of the original languages. Upon no previous revision have so many scholars been engaged; in no previous revision have such precautions been taken against accident or oversight, or against any bias that might arise from ecclesiastical adherence. It is the ripe product of all the light and all the scholarship which the ages have produced, brought to bear upon every available source of information, to bring us back as closely as possible to the exact body of teaching which God designed as the revelation of His nature and His will.

Writings upon Stone.

In our thought of the sources from which our present written Bible has been derived, we shall speak first of writings upon stone.

We could wish that we had the original stone tables upon which the Ten Commandments were written on Mount Sinai and given into the care of Moses. These have long since disappeared, but we have writings on stone, of great antiquity and of exceeding importance.

In the city of Paris its most important building, both architecturally and on account of its treasures of art and learning, is the Louvre, a vast

structure, covering an area of forty-eight acres. Through every change of government since the days of Napoleon I. the collections of this building have been enriched, until they are practically inexhaustible. Among the numberless possessions of the Louvre, hardly one is of greater importance than the Moabite Stone, its inscription written in the ancient Phœnician, of which there are but few examples left. It was discovered in 1868 at Dibon in Moab, east of the Dead Sea. It bears an inscription of Mesha, king of Moab, who is mentioned in Second Kings 3:4. Undoubtedly the inscription is as old as the ninth century before Christ, and is the oldest existing specimen of the ancestral Phœnician language.

In the city of London is another stone, not quite so ancient, and yet of peculiar interest and importance in the story of the translation of ancient languages, and not without its bearing upon the text of Scripture. In the British Museum, perhaps unequaled in the world as a repository of treasures in literature and archæology, is the famous Rosetta Stone, which opened the meaning of Egyptian hieroglyphs. It is a large slab of black basalt, found in the year 1799 by a French engineer in the trenches on Fort St. Julien near Rosetta, in Egypt. It contains an inscription in three languages. Beginning from the top, there are fourteen lines of hieroglyphic text, the ecclesiastical language of Egypt, then thirty-two lines of the ordinary Egyptian, then fifty-four lines of

Greek. The reading of the Greek reveals the fact that the inscription on the stone was a repetition of the same proclamation in three languages, and hence the key to the hieroglyphs of Egypt was placed in the hands of the world of scholarship. The decree upon the stone is one issued by the Egyptian priesthood to commemorate the beneficent deeds of Ptolemy V.

The deciphering of Egyptian hieroglyphs has been of exceeding value in the way of corroboration of the Scripture record. For example, on the south wall of the court of Shishonk, in the temple of Karnak, Egypt, are to be seen representations of King Shishak returning in triumph from a war. His captives, having their hands tied behind them and ropes around their necks, are kneeling before him. The faces are distinctly Jewish, and the inscription means Judah-Melek, King of Judah. We know that Judah-Melek was Rehoboam, whose defeat by Shishak is recorded in Kings and Chronicles. Thus six hundred miles up the Nile is another proof of the inspiration and truthful record of the Word of God. God has not left Himself without a witness. The spade of the archæologist, the brain and the linguistic achievements of translators, are alike witnesses of His glory and His truth.

Ancient Manuscripts in the Original Languages

We now come to ancient manuscripts in the original languages. We are all well aware that

the Old Testament, with some few exceptions, is written in Hebrew, the language of the Jews, a branch of the great Semitic family of languages, so called because the nations to which they belonged were considered to be chiefly descendants of Shem. The Syriac and Arabic represent other branches of the same great family, and increasing knowledge of them in recent days has thrown much light upon the language of the Old Testament.

Most monasteries had their scriptoria, or writing-rooms, attached to their libraries, and there through the quiet hours the copyists wrought at their task. Their work was deemed to be of a sacred character and it was done with the utmost reverence. Many of the copyists were men who had had their training in Jewish schools, and after their conversion to Christianity found their best employment in transcribing the Epistles and other books meant for the use of the churches. Many of these early manuscripts are beautifully illuminated, written with wonderful clearness and care. Special privileges were granted to those whose hands must be kept delicate for their exacting tasks, and they were often excused from the coarser employments of hewing wood, drawing water, or planting the gardens of the convents. It is pathetic to read in these later days of the pious care and affection with which the work was done and its results treasured, and no one can look at the stained and tattered pages

of the oldest manuscripts, or turn the leaves of daintily and splendidly illuminated Bibles, without having the mental picture rise before him of those quiet scriptoria, where the work was a labor of love and where the divine blessing was often invoked upon every stroke of the pen and brush. Longfellow, in his "Golden Legend," and Wallace, in the poem of "The Blessed Hand," have immortalized this work.

The New Testament, it need hardly be said, is written in Greek, and, as is the case with the Hebrew, the present condition of the Greek text has been an evolution. We have what we have today because of the incredible labors of reverent scholars for many years. Ours is the heritage of long ages of toil. We may speak briefly of the three most ancient manuscripts, all of which are in Greek.

The Alexandrine Manuscript.

In the British Museum there is a priceless manuscript, the Alexandrine, the first of all the great manuscripts which was critically studied and applied to the correction of the text of Scripture. It was presented to Charles I. of England in 1628 by the patriarchs of Constantinople, who brought it from Egypt when the British Museum was established in 1753. It was sent to this repository from the royal collection and it may be seen there today, preserved in a glass case, no hand allowed to touch

it except in rare instances and for the purpose of scholarly investigation. It is in four volumes. As to the exact origin of the manuscript nothing can be determined with positiveness, except that it is Egyptian and probably Alexandrian. The vellum upon which the writing is placed is well preserved, though in many places age has crumbled the leaves. The letters of the text are large and comparatively clear. There are no spaces between the words, no accents or breathings, and but few instances of punctuation or abbreviation. This is the oldest manuscript with uncial, or capital letters, which we have at first hand.

The Vatican Manuscript.

The second of these manuscripts is the Vatican manuscript, which is in the Vatican library at Rome.

That library is not as often visited as are the rooms in the same vast structure crowded with masterpieces of sculpture and painting, the collection of sculpture unsurpassed. The number and value of the manuscripts contained in this library surpass those of any other collection in the world. The most priceless treasure in the library is the Codex Vaticanus, one of the earliest and most valuable manuscripts of the Bible in existence. It is closely guarded and is held beyond price. The first catalogue of the Vatican library was issued in 1475, and this manuscript appears in the catalogue of that date. The library

was founded in 1448, hence the Vatican manuscript may be fairly considered to have been one of the original volumes of the collection. This, the most valuable manuscript of the Bible, is, and has been through the ages, in the possession of the Roman Catholic Church.

Until recently it has been with the greatest difficulty that scholars gained access to the Vatican manuscript. Pope Leo XIII., however, pursued a more liberal policy than did some of his predecessors, and a splendid facsimile edition by prototype was made and may be seen in many of the well-equipped libraries of Europe and America. There are comparatively few of them in America. It was my pleasure to see and to handle one of these in the magnificent library of the late James G. Batterson of Hartford, a gift to him from Rome as a recognition of distinguished attainment and service. It may not be generally known that Mr. Batterson, beside being one of the eminent business men of New England during his lifetime, was a noted Greek scholar. The study of Greek was to him his principal recreation, and the early morning hours usually found him engrossed in his library.

Before this facsimile edition appeared, many attempts had been made to study the precious manuscript. The famous German scholar, to whom we shall later refer, Dr. Tischendorf, tried to get the use of the manuscript in his critical work, in 1843, and was finally successful in gain-

ing six hours with it. Twenty-three years later, after he had discovered and published the Sinaitic manuscript and hence was the most noted authority on manuscripts in the world, he was at last successful in having the use of the Vatican manuscript in a private room off the library and worked upon a transcription for forty-two hours.

In 1808 the papal dominions became temporarily a part of the French Empire and Napoleon I. caused many of the treasures of the Roman museums and libraries to be carried to Paris. Among them was this priceless manuscript. There it might have been studied freely had anybody known enough to do so. But competent critics were not ready. When Napoleon was overthrown at Waterloo in 1815, the manuscript, with many other treasures, was returned to Rome.

The Sinaitic Manuscript.

The third of these priceless manuscripts is in some respects the most noted of all, because of the romantic manner in which it came into the possession of the world of scholarship. It is known as the Sinaitic manuscript and is now in the National Library in St. Petersburg. It has a romantic and singularly interesting story.

The discoverer of the Sinaitic manuscript was Lobegott Friedrich Constantin Tischendorf, a famous German scholar, to whom we owe a debt that we can never pay. The name Lobegott, or

Praise God, was given to him by his mother, who had a presentiment that her child would be born blind. When he was found to have good eyes, her thankful heart insisted that his name should commemorate the goodness of God. Those eyes became the working tools of the first scholar of the world in the determining of the text of Scripture.

For years Tischendorf gave his life to the discovery and study of the ancient manuscripts of the Bible, using the best resources of Europe in his day and also traveling to the libraries of the East. He explored the recesses of Greek, Syrian and Armenian monasteries. He searched through Alexandria and Cairo, but found nothing to especially reward his eager search. Guided, as it would seem, by the Spirit of the God of truth, he set out on the hard journey through the Sinaitic peninsula, on which stands Mount Sinai, where the tables of the law were given to Moses. Near the base of that mountain is the Convent of St. Catherine, dating from the time of Justinian. Here through many centuries the brotherhood of monks had devoted itself to worship and quiet study and a rich library had grown up. The monks, however, seemed strangely ignorant of some of the manuscript treasures within their walls.

Dr. Tischendorf arrived at St. Catherine's on May 24, 1844. He was allowed free access to the library, which was rich in manuscripts, but for a time it seemed that his researches would be

unrewarded by any discovery of special value. At length his eye fell upon a large basketful of old parchments, waiting to serve as kindling when the next fire should be lighted. Two basketfuls of similar fragments had already been employed for that purpose. As Tischendorf turned over the pieces he found that there were a number of leaves of the Old Testament in Greek, which bore evidence of being more ancient than any he had ever seen. His quick exclamation and trembling hands aroused the cupidity of the monks, for they were led to suspect that these manuscripts had a value of which they had no knowledge. Tischendorf was allowed to take a small portion of the fragments, forty-three leaves, but no persuasion of his could induce the monks to part with the remainder, which only a few moments before they had been ready to burn. These leaves were borne to Leipzig, and there deposited in the University library. Tischendorf did not tell where he had found the fragments, for he had by no means given up hope of eventually securing the remainder. By means of an influential friend at the court of Egypt he endeavored to procure the entire manuscript, so far as it could be found, but without success. His friend wrote: "The monks of the convent, since your departure, have learned the value of the parchments and will not part with them at any price." Tischendorf paid another visit to Mount Sinai in 1853 and was cordially welcomed,

but could not find the slightest trace of the longed-for manuscript.

In 1859 he came to St. Catherine's, this time with a formidable open sesame. The convent was under the Greek Church; the Czar of Russia is the head of that church. This time he came with the imperial command to produce the manuscript. The familiar rooms of the library were thrown open to him. The custodian of the books showed him every courtesy. Many invaluable manuscripts, some of which he had not seen in his previous visits, were put into his hands, but nowhere was the one treasure he desired, and every inquiry was met with sincere denials of its existence in the monastery. The German scholar was forced to conclude that it had either been destroyed or removed to some other library, and he was about to take his departure. The very evening before he was to leave he was walking in the garden with the steward, and as they returned the monk invited him into his cell to take some refreshment. Scarcely had they entered the cell, when, resuming his former conversation, the monk said, "I, too, have a copy of that Septuagint." So saying, he took down a bulky bundle wrapped in red cloth and laid it on the table. The parcel was opened and Tischendorf, to his amazement, found not only the fragments that he had seen fifteen years before, but also other parts of the Old Testament, the New Testament complete, and some of the

apocalyptic books. He asked, in a careless way, for permission to look it over in his bedroom, and there, he says, "I gave way to my transports of joy. I knew that I held in my hand one of the most precious biblical treasures in existence, a document whose age and importance exceeded that of any I had ever seen after twenty years' study of the subject."

Through the Czar's influence and will he succeeded in obtaining the precious manuscript, which now finds its home in the library of St. Petersburg, the greatest treasure in the possession of the Greek Church.

There are many other manuscripts of importance and usefulness, but none to compare with the three of which we have spoken. Some of the other manuscripts are Palimpsests, where under the straggling writing are seen faint, faded lines of old uncial letters. Parchment was very expensive. For that reason scribes sometimes used old parchments, which had been used before, and by careful scraping and erasing of the old letters, the skin was made tolerably fit for use again. In many cases the writing thus blotted out was of much greater value than that which replaced it. In process of time the action of the atmosphere brought out the words of the old text with more or less clearness, so that the one parchment in many cases bears two texts, the one written over the other, and both to be deciphered with difficulty.

Among the best known manuscripts, apart from the Alexandrine, the Vatican and the Sinaitic, are the Codex Ephraem, in the royal library at Paris, the Codex Bezae, in the library of the University of Cambridge, the Rossanensis manuscript, found in 1879 in Rossano, Italy, and the Codex Purpureus, the bulk of which was found in the monastery of St. John in the island of Patmos in the Ægean Sea.

We now come to ancient versions in other tongues than the Greek and Hebrew, upon only one of which we can dwell at any length, though the Syriac and Egyptian versions are eminently worthy of extended attention.

The Vulgate of St. Jerome.

Of all the translations in tongues other than the Greek and Hebrew, the most interesting is the Vulgate, written in the Latin tongue, a version which, as has already been said, is the source of the Rhemish and Douay versions used in the Roman Catholic Church of today. There were already Latin Bibles in existence, and they contained so many variations that the need of some kind of revision began to be very keenly felt. When the leaders of the Latin-speaking churches were looking about for some one to do this work, attention was called to one whose high reputation pointed him out as the very man. Eusebius Hieronymus, known to us as St. Jerome, was a man of great resource, a most industrious and

energetic worker, an able and accomplished scholar. He was an adept in all the learning of the day. He had access to Hebrew manuscripts probably centuries older than the time of our Lord, and he produced the most valuable translation of the Bible that was ever made, up to the issuing of the Authorized Version of Scripture. No other work has had such an influence in the history of the Bible.

In a cave, called the Cave of St. Jerome, close to the Sacred Grotto beneath the Church of the Nativity in Bethlehem, St. Jerome spent thirty years of his life. His labors were finished and the Vulgate appeared about the close of the fourth century and was received with a storm of opposition. It was called revolutionary, heretical. It was held to be an impious tampering with the inspired Word of God. For centuries it was rejected and condemned, and everything which ignorant bigotry could suggest was used to bring it into disrepute. It was a sad story, but it does not stand alone, for other brave men have worn out their lives in great achievements and have seen their work banned and proscribed to their dying day.

But St. Jerome was to be vindicated at last. At the time of the Council of Trent, when the injured old scholar had been a thousand years dead, men had grown attached to the Vulgate. In fact, they seem almost to have forgotten that it was only a translation. When errors were

pointed out, the idea of correcting them by means of the old manuscripts in Greek and Hebrew was quite resented. The Latin Vulgate received the seal of the authority of the Roman Catholic Church. It was accepted as final and authentic, and it was decreed that it was the standard version to which appeal must be made in all matters of controversy. Dean Milman says: "Jerome's Bible is a wonderful work, still more as achieved by one man, and that by a Western Christian, even with all the advantages of study and residence in the East. It almost created a new language. . . . The Vulgate was even more perhaps than the papal power the foundation of Latin Christianity. . . . It was in his cell at Bethlehem, meditating and completing the Vulgate, that Jerome fixed for centuries the dominion of Christianity over the mind of man."

The Early Christian Fathers.

We now come to the question of quotations from Scripture in the writings of the early Christian fathers. The quantity of these writings is very great, but they have been only imperfectly examined. In spite of the fact that the Scripture quotations are often fragmentary and sometimes made loosely from memory, they are yet of great value in determining the text of ancient Bibles, some of them going back to the days of the original New Testament writings.

A most interesting table, which can be found

in almost any of the standard works upon the origins of Scripture, will show the temporal relation between the best known of these pioneers of the Christian Church. Among the most important of them for our purpose are Origen, Irenæus and Polycarp. Among other notable leaders of the Church in those early days were Eusebius, living from about 260 to 339 A. D., in whose writings we find direct allusions to or quotations from every one of the books of the New Testament, with the possible exception of James, Second Peter, Second John, Third John and Jude; and Ignatius, who died before 150 A. D., in whose writings we find allusions to or quotations from Matthew, John, First Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, First Thessalonians, and Philemon.

Origen was a discriminating student and editor of the Septuagint, and his labors upon the text of the New Testament were those of a great scholar. His work was begun in Cæsarea and finished in Tyre. He undertook the enormous labor of comparing the Greek text, then generally accepted, with the Hebrew and other Greek translations, collecting for the purpose manuscripts from every known source.

Going back toward the time of Christ, we find Irenæus, who was Bishop of Lyons in Gaul. His bishopric extended from the time of the persecution under Marcus Aurelius, 177 A. D., to his own martyrdom under Septimius Severus in

202 A. D. In his writings we find reference to the four Gospels, the Acts, twelve of the letters of Paul, First Peter, First and Second John, and Revelation, which last he expressly ascribes to John the beloved disciple. See how large a part of the New Testament is directly referred to in the writings of one who died in the year 202. It is exceedingly interesting to read his own account of his interview with Polycarp, of whom he says, in a letter: "I can recall the very place where the blessed Polycarp used to sit and teach, his going out and his coming in, his mode of life, his appearance, the style of his address to the people, his familiar intercourse with St. John and with the rest of those who had seen the Lord, and how he remembered their sayings. Whatever he had heard from them concerning our Lord, His miracles and mode of teaching, Polycarp, being instructed by those who were eyewitnesses of the Word, recounted in strict agreement with the Scriptures."

And this Polycarp, who was so distinctly in the personal memory of Irenæus, was a pupil of the apostle John, whose life and writings form a link between the apostolic days and the second century. Polycarp, then an old, old man, was put to death for his faith in the persecution under Marcus Aurelius and Lucius Verus. We are told that the martyr laid aside his garments and calmly took his place in the midst of the fagots prepared for him. When they would have se-

cured him with nails to the stake he said, "Let me remain as I am, for He that hath enabled me to brave the fire will so constrain me that without fastening me with nails I shall unmoved endure its fierceness." And so he passed away. The cypress tree above his alleged tomb stands lonely against the sky in Smyrna. In one letter of Polycarp, and that a short one, there are forty clear allusions to the books of the New Testament, some of the allusions exceedingly valuable for critical purposes. Do not forget that he was the contemporary of the apostle John.

The Bible of Wiclif.

Now, perforce, we must hasten to the close, with a simple reference to English Versions, — the Bible of Wiclif, the Bible of Tyndale, the Authorized or St. James Version and the Revision.

John Wiclif lived from 1324 to 1384 A. D. In the little English village of Lutterworth, a small market town in the neighborhood of Leicester, may be seen a simple village church. In that church is the very pulpit from which Wiclif preached. In the vestry is the old oak chair in which, according to the tradition of the place, he died. It was a great life which closed in that little English village, the life of a man whose extraordinary abilities were fully acknowledged during his lifetime. Wiclif was not merely a theologian, he was widely acquainted with the

science of his day. He was entirely familiar with everything which had been discovered up to his time in mathematics, in chemistry, in natural history, beside his ample knowledge in his own distinctive branches of scholarship. He had all the learning and quickness of mind required for debate with the greatest scholars of the day, and he did debate with them, as they knew to their cost. He contributed more than any other man to the great Reformation in the Church of England, and its severance from the Church of Rome a century and a half later. Macaulay calls Wiclif the first, and perhaps the greatest, of the reformers.

During the latter years of Wiclif's life he accomplished his greatest work, the translation of the Bible into the English tongue. There had been partial translations of Scripture from the Latin into the English. The Gospel of John was translated into the Anglo-Saxon by the Venerable Bede in the eighth century. The great King Alfred at the time of his death was personally engaged in translating a portion of the Bible. There were two rough translations of the Gospels and of the Psalms. But John Wiclif was the first to translate the whole Latin Bible into English prose, and to put it, without note or comment, into the hands of his countrymen. What he said regarding the placing of the Bible in the hands of the people might be said by any man of today, so far ahead of his times he was:

"The faith of the church is contained in the Scriptures. The more these are known, then, the better, and as assuredly as men should understand the faith that they profess, that faith should be taught in whatever language may be best known to them."

As a mere translation, Wiclif's Bible is of only secondary value, for it is taken from the Latin, not from the original languages of Scripture. It is a translation of the Vulgate. The worth of Wiclif's version lies in its English. It fixed the language. It became a ground of literature. No other book could have been that, for the Book alone came to the people with supreme authority.

This man first opened the Bible to our English fathers. Our Christian institutions and literature of today are saturated with the imperishable results of his toil. As some one has nobly said, "It went wherever there should be English homes, to brighten and bless them; wherever there should be English toil, to sanctify it; wherever there should be English graves, to tell of the resurrection and the life. In one final word, Wiclif's translation of the Bible was, for the English-speaking race around the world, the second resurrection. The day of its completion was the Easter Day of the English language."

The Bible of Tyndale.

One hundred and fifty years passed since John Wiclif had given to the English people the Bible in their own language. Wiclif's work was done a century before William Caxton had set up his rude printing press, and the printing press had created a new era in the realm of letters. It remained for William Tyndale to do his work in the giving of the Bible to the people, not only in the English language, but in printed form.

Tyndale was the contemporary of Luther, Zwingli and Erasmus. He was trained in Oxford and in Cambridge, a man of wide and deep learning. It is evident that his thinking was much influenced by the writings of Erasmus, with whose praise all Europe was then ringing and who was in high favor with those of most exalted rank in England. But Tyndale thought for himself. He was no parrot. We must not stop upon the story of his life, fascinating as would be the narration. Suffice it to say that there came a time when, in debate with a certain learned man, Tyndale said, "If God spare my life, ere many years I will cause a boy that driveth a plow to know more of the Scriptures than thou dost." His purpose became fixed to translate the New Testament into the English language from the original Greek, not from the Latin Vulgate as Wiclif had done. He soon found that there was no room in London to translate the New Testament, and also that there

was no safe place to do it in all England. So in 1524 he sailed to Hamburg, never again to set foot on his native land. The air was freer in Germany, the Reformation had made much more progress there. In the following year we find him in Cologne, with the sheets of the New Testament in the printer's hands.

Against fierce opposition and with many trials, the book began to circulate in England. It had a hard struggle against the authority of the law, the condemnation of the church, and the wickedness and bigotry of the times. In spite of all opposition, however, the book was smuggled into the realm and found its way to the people, and it was everywhere being talked about and read.

Tyndale himself did not see the day of the triumph of his work. He was treacherously arrested in Antwerp and was hurried to prison. For over a year and six months he was in confinement, "sitting cold and dark and solitary in the damp cells of Vilvorde during the long cheerless nights of winter, and earnestly pleading for the favor of a light and warm clothing, and, above all, of books to comfort him," like the great Apostle of the Gentiles in the Mamertine dungeon. On October 6, 1536, the martyrdom was accomplished. He was strangled to death and his body was burned by the side of the castle. His work was done, and his service in the transmission of the English Bible, first to those of his

own age and eventually to us of a later day, is beyond all computation.

The St. James or Authorized Version.

This year there is being celebrated the three hundredth anniversary of the issue of the St. James Version, or Authorized Version, of the Scriptures. King James I. of England found that he could not prevent the incoming of the Bible, and hence he was shrewd enough to decide to stamp that Bible with his own coat-of-arms. Fifty-four learned men were selected from High Churchmen and Puritans, as well as from those who represented a scholarship unattached to any ecclesiastical party. The king also sought to secure the cooperation of every biblical scholar of note in the kingdom, "such learned men as, having especial skill in the Hebrew and Greek tongues, have taken pains in their private studies of the Scriptures for the clearing of any obscurities either in the Hebrew or the Greek, or touching any difficulties or mistakings in the former English translations." The revisers were divided into six companies, each of which took its own portion as its field of labor. The Greek and Hebrew were carefully studied. Bibles in Spanish, Italian, French, and German were examined for any aid which they might give. The best commentaries of European scholars were consulted, and the effort was made to express the text in clear, vigorous English. After four years

of work, in 1611 the translation was published, and henceforth the Bible was available to the people as were other books.

Dr. Newell Dwight Hillis has well said: "The year 1611 was a great year for old England. In that year Shakespeare wrote two of his greatest plays. In that year Bacon wrote the first draft of his greatest book, the 'Advancement of Learning.' In that year imperial Spain, hitherto counting herself the only first-class nation, recognized little England as her equal on land and sea. In that year William Brewster took the second half of the Pilgrim Fathers from Scrooby across to Leyden, preparatory to the great voyage, when the architects of the new states, tossing on the Mayflower, were to sign that compact that was to be the seed corn of our Constitution. But the world now knows that the greatest event for England in 1611 was the translation of the Bible into the language of the common people. From that hour they searched the Scriptures, and found eternal life therein, and also found the springs of law, liberty, and progress."

The Revised Version.

We now come, in conclusion, to a brief reference to our modern Revised Version of the Scriptures.

Westminster Abbey, in London, is justly regarded by England as her national Temple of Fame. Burial within its walls is considered the

last and greatest honor which the nation can bestow on the most deserving of her sons and daughters. Through the aisles of this national mausoleum flows the majestic stream of English history. Adjoining the little court of the deanery at the south of the Abbey is the entrance to the Jerusalem Chamber, where in days long gone the first of the Lancastrian kings of England breathed out his weary life. In that room was drawn up the Westminster Confession. In that room, in June of 1870, met the picked scholars of all Britain, gathered for the revision of the Authorized Version of the Scriptures. At the center of the long table sat the chairman, Bishop Ellicott, and around him the flower of English scholarship. There were Alford and Stanley, and Lightfoot, Westcott and Hort, Scrivener and Eadie, and the venerable Archbishop of Dublin. Different religious communions were represented, varying schools of thought. Methodist and Baptist and Presbyterian and Anglican sat side by side in that selected company, as if to guard against even an unconscious bias toward any set of theological views. Across the Atlantic a similarly constructed company was cooperating with this, to criticise their work and to suggest emendations. Nearly one hundred of the ripest scholars of England and America were connected with the Revision. For more than fifteen hundred years scholars had been toiling in many lands over the masses of biblical lore, and the results

of those toils appeared in the clear and carefully prepared sheets which lay upon the table before the revisers. The scholarship of the ages was brought to bear upon the Book of books.

So the work went on, month after month, until more than ten years had passed, and some of the most distinguished of those who met on that first day in 1870 to begin the work were numbered among the company of the redeemed in heaven. In the evening of November 11, 1880, there was an assembly for special prayer and thanksgiving in the Church of St. Martin-in-the-Fields — thanksgiving for the happy completion of the labor upon the New Testament, and prayer that God might use it for the good of men and for the honor of His holy name. Four years afterward the company revising the Old Testament finished its work, and on May 5, 1885, the complete Revised Bible was in the hands of the people.

The Revised Version therefore is the result of the use of all the authorities, of all the results of the best thinking of the ages, together with the utilization of manuscripts, some of which have been discovered within very recent years. No previous revision has ever had such an advantage. Upon no previous revision have such scholars been engaged. In no previous revision have those who took the lead shown so large a measure of fellowship with those outside their own communion. In no previous revision have such

effective precautions been taken against accidental oversight or lurking bias. The Revision, both English and American editions, may be fairly said to possess pre-eminent claims upon the confidence of all devout thinkers and readers of the Scriptures. Beyond all other versions, it brings us close to the meaning of the original form in which the written Scriptures were given to mankind.

The Conclusion of the Matter.

So we have, though closely limited by the necessities of time and space, discussed the origins of the Bible as we have it today. Surely it is the Book of books. For eighteen hundred years it has stood. Rome has gone down in ruin, the empires of Charlemagne and Napoleon have flourished and gone into decay, England, Germany and America have taken their places among the great nations of the earth, wars civil and religious have raged, the earth has been deluged in blood, but through the ages the Bible has stood, and stands, not a book missing or seriously mutilated, the mightiest power upon earth. "For some reason which never fails to move me with awe, God has been pleased in all these years to communicate most largely His impulse and His irresistible energy through these vital pages." We must not fail to realize the significance of the well-known lines —

"Last eve I paused beside a blacksmith's door,
And heard the anvil ring the vesper chime;
Then, looking in, I saw upon the floor
Old hammers worn with beating years of time.

'How many anvils have you had?' said I,
'To wear and batter all these hammers so?'
'Just one,' said he; then said, with twinkling eye,
'The anvil wears the hammers out, you know.'

And so, I thought, the anvil of God's Word,
For ages sceptic blows have beat upon;
Yet, though the noise of falling blows was heard,
The anvil is unharmed — the hammers gone."

II

The Bible and the Twentieth Century

T. HARWOOD PATTISON

We must first pause to pay our tribute of reverence and admiration to the last century. As a Bible era, one of the critical points in the progress of our Bible, it is not too much to say that the nineteenth century is worthy to take its place beside the great century in which Jerome gave us the Vulgate; or that in which Tyndale translated the Bible into the tongue so dear to the majority of my readers; or that in which the version which bears the name of King James saw the light. If with the passing of the dark ages "Greece rose from the grave with the New Testament in her hand," with equal truth may it be said that the nineteenth century rose from the grave of the eighteenth with the Bible for the whole world in hers.

Two Memorable Rooms.

There are two rooms in London which seem to me to be forever memorable in the history of the Bible. The first may still be found on the edge of the river Thames, in the busiest part

of the city. Here, a hundred years ago, were the offices of Joseph Hardcastle, one of the merchant princes of London, endued with such entire devotion to the spread of the gospel that he welcomed men like-minded with himself when they came to consult on matters of the highest moment to the advance of the Kingdom of God. In his private office were held the early committee meetings of the London Missionary Society and the Religious Tract Society; and here was born the British and Foreign Bible Society.

"I scarcely ever pass over London Bridge," one of Joseph Hardcastle's colleagues wrote, "without glancing my eye toward those highly favored rooms, feeling a glow of pleasure at the recollection that there many societies formed their plans of Christian benevolence. Those rooms in my judgment are second to none but that in which the disciples met after their Master's ascension, and from which they went forth to enlighten and to bless a dark and guilty world."

The nineteenth century caught the mission of the first. Pentecost in Jerusalem heard the wonderful works of God divinely recounted through the miraculous gift of tongues to the multitudes from many lands gathered about the apostles. By England and America supremely has this honor been assumed in the age in which we live. Every man the world over is to hear in his own language the news of God's unspeakable gift.

In the great work of Bible translation, all the

leading churches of Protestant Christendom have played a part. And this work is emphatically the work of the nineteenth century. Up to the year 1800 there were only sixty-six languages and dialects, so far as we know, into which any portion of the Scriptures had been translated. But by 1860 the number had risen to two hundred and twenty. By 1890 it had touched three hundred and thirty-one, and we cross the threshold of the new century with some four hundred and fifty-one versions, while every year this number is increased. Berthold, archbishop of Mayence, in 1468 forbade the circulation of religious works in the vernacular, on the ground that the German language was incapable of expressing the deep truths of religion. Today the whole wide world, whether savage or civilized, laughs that embargo to scorn. Our religion has not yet failed through any mother tongue to win its way to the common human heart.

The second memorable London room to which I call your attention, is better known than Joseph Hardcastle's dingy office. It is the Jerusalem Chamber, in the Deanery of Westminster, which will forever be associated with the Revised Version of the Bible, the achievement of the nineteenth century in its closing years. In the whole history of the English Bible the public interest in this version remains without any parallel.

"When the Revised Version of the English New Testament appeared in 1881, orders for a

million copies were received before publication by the Oxford Press alone, and perhaps an equal number was ordered from the Cambridge Press. The sale of the Revised Testament opened in the United States on May 20 amid scenes absolutely unparalleled in the book trade since the beginning of the world. It is said that thirty-three thousand copies were sold on that day in New York. They were hawked about the streets by newsboys and fakirs, and sold even under the shadow of the Stock Exchange. Two Chicago papers, the *Tribune* and the *Times,* had a large part of the New Testament telegraphed from New York and sent it to their readers complete within two days of publication. The *Tribune* employed for the purpose ninety-two compositors and five correctors, and the whole was completed in twelve hours. The *Times* had the four Gospels, the Acts, and the Epistle to the Romans telegraphed, and set up the remainder from a copy that was forwarded by rail. The portion telegraphed contains about one hundred and eighty thousand words and constitutes the longest dispatch ever sent over the wires. A large number of papers followed the example of these in Chicago and sent the New Testament to their readers as a supplement to their regular issues. Besides this extensive newspaper circulation, there were as many as thirty editions issued in America before the close of the year. Who, in the light of these facts, can doubt the pre-eminence of the

Bible among all books? Of no other could such things be possible." [1]

That the final revision of the Bible has now seen the light, no one with any understanding of the times supposes. The immense influence which the Authorized Version has exercised for nearly three hundred years has not been checked by its younger rival. The demand for it is greater than it ever was. One great service, indeed, which the Revised Version has rendered to our Christian faith is to demonstrate that the Bible, so far from fearing, welcomes examination, and demands that the acutest and soundest scholarship of each age should be devoted to its pages. At the same time, the learning gathered about the table in the Jerusalem Chamber, in its turn, testifies that to be engaged in the study of the old version is to admire more and more "its simplicity, its dignity, its power, its happy turns of expression, its general accuracy, and the music of its cadences, and the felicity of its rhythm." The growing circulation of the Revised Version, alike in its British and American form, has only gone to swell, as by some great tributary, the parent river, moving on in its majestic course through all the English-speaking peoples of the world. Assuredly the nineteenth century places the English Bible in the hands of the twentieth a worthier transcript of the revelation of God to man than it has ever been before.

[1] Professor Perry, of Hartford Theological Seminary.

Forces to be Encountered.

I turn now to consider some of the forces which our Bible will certainly have to encounter in this present century. As I do so, I am impressed at once with the altered feeling in reference to the book throughout the intelligent world. The very tone of opposition has changed for the better. In the eighteenth century it could with truth be said of Voltaire that,

> The Scripture was his jest book, whence he drew
> Bonmots to gall the Christian and the Jew.

The spirit of contemptuous scorn breaks into a coarser temper in Thomas Paine, a few years later, when he concludes the first part of his "Age of Reason" by saying: "I have now gone through the Bible, as a man would go through a wood with an axe, and felled trees. Here they lie, and the priests may replant them, but they will never make them grow." For the present, at least, we seem to have seen the last of the men who, whether for love of gain or to catch a transient notoriety, will treat the Bible as an object of ridicule or a target for invective. The world of life and the world of letters have ceased to respect antagonists of this order. Probably the Bible never stood so high in the estimation of the human intellect, never so high in the love of the human heart, as it does at this moment. But it must look to be measured against the forces which hold the field as our century opens.

From that ordeal, how may we anticipate that it will emerge? By considering what these forces are we shall best answer this question.

A Quickened Intellectual Life.

1. Let me name as first among the characteristics of the twentieth century a quickened intellectual life.

The form in which this message from God reaches us is of great moment. Here you see a printed book. It does not change with the passing years. It is not at the mercy of speech as is the sermon of the preacher. It does not shift its ground as does public opinion. Every advance, therefore, in recovering a pure Bible is a return to rock truth, to the clearer understanding of the mind of God Himself. As a printed book, the Bible has always led the field. Even up to 1490, it had exceeded in the amount of printing all other books put together. A thousand editions of the Bible, in whole or in part, were issued in the first half-century of the history of printing. From that time onward the Bible has continued to be the best-known book in the world. That which is best known is therefore best guarded. The printed page has taken the place of the manuscript parchment. Errors which were formerly inevitable in transmission are now practically impossible. The book is fitter than it has ever been to submit itself to the examination of the age to which it comes.

An Age of Careful Criticism.

a. Our age is an age trained to careful criticism. No treatment of our subject would be adequate and fair which did not do justice to the immense service that the criticism of the present time in this country, in Great Britain, in Germany, is rendering to the textual study of the Bible.

" In the monumental works on biblical grammar and lexicography and the great concordances to the Old and New Testaments produced during the nineteenth century, we have enduring bulwarks, impregnable so long as men have skill to employ them against the inroads of arbitrary interpretation. They are the firmest guarantee that the Protestant standard of faith and practice will not be turned into a laughing-stock under the gibe, Scripture means whatever the individual interpreter wants it to. Our highest tributes of honor will be none too high for the men who have forever silenced this jeer by disposing of the arbitrary interpreter and restoring to the Scripture writers the right to mean what they say, whether in agreement with modern theological views or not." [1]

The critic, no doubt, as any other man, has his limitations, and, as any other man, he does not always respect them. Still, as ever, must it be true that it is with the message itself and not with the form in which it comes to us that we

[1] Professor Bacon, of Yale University.

are supremely interested. But we cannot be too thankful that the criticism of today is so deeply occupied with that form. That it is increasingly so with every advance in the science of language is surely an augury for good. Only we must insist that while grammar is to be the basis of much of our work on the Bible, it can never be more than the means to an end, the channel of the marble aqueduct through which flows to parched lips the water of life. John Ruskin complained to his friend Professor Knight that people are eager to "prove all things," but not so eager to "hold fast to that which is good." To fail here, however, is to fail altogether. It is to grasp the dictionary, but lose a literature. It is to spend our lives over the letter, and miss entirely the spirit.

An Age of Literary Culture.

b. Our age is an age of increasing literary culture. As to the quality of that culture I am not saying anything. All that I need to do is to note the fact. It is calculated that on literature and education the churches of America alone expend more than thirty-two million dollars yearly. Such a widespread desire for mental improvement certainly never distinguished any previous century. To me this is one sign, and perhaps the easiest on which to fasten, of literary quickening. Unless this quickening should change in its character, the Bible will be a prime element

in its affluent life. Of the Bible the world over it is true, "The entrance of thy word giveth light."

At fifty years of age Professor Huxley took up Greek, as his son believes, that he might learn to read the New Testament in the original. The study of the English Bible as literature has been called a discovery of our own time. Certainly it is a necessary consequence of the discoveries, the scholarship, and the general literary interest of the century. The Bible is the staple of any intelligent investigation into the roots of our language. This the latest abridgment of the "International Dictionary" recognizes by retaining all the words in the King James version and in Shakespeare, even though they may have become rare and perhaps obsolete in our daily speech. Ruskin has left us a list, made out by his mother, of the chapters in the Bible which she thought to be best suited for his special training, and he counts the impress which these chapters made on his taste in literature as "the most precious and on the whole the one essential part of his education." "The music of the English Bible," writes Cardinal Manning, looking back half-mournfully to his early life as an English clergyman, "became a part of my soul."

Whether or not we use the English Bible in our public schools, the words of Frederic Harrison must remain true: "The English Bible is

the true school of English literature. It possesses every quality of our language in its highest form. The book which begot English prose still remains its supreme type." Not less emphatic is the judgment of James Anthony Froude: "The Bible, thoroughly known, is a literature of itself — the rarest and richest in all departments of thought and imagination which exists."

Literature, more perhaps than science or than art, has its fashions; but already the Bible has survived so many of these that it is in no danger of going out of fashion at the bidding of any passing literary caprice. No other body of literature so certainly appeals to every variety of intellectual taste. No other body of literature has such infinite variety in itself. As no previous age the age in which we live is learning to prize the Bible as literature.

Nor is it possible to separate the literary beauty of the Bible from its spiritual contents. In all ages God has been pleased to select men for the work of translation who were equipped not alone with a strong faith but also with the intellectual culture which could make that faith doubly effective. Tennyson's mother tells him how fervently she has prayed "that the Holy Spirit may urge him to employ his talents to impress on the minds of others the precepts of God's Holy Word." Who shall say that "In Memoriam" is not one answer to these prayers? The literary excellence

of this Bible is a weapon which the Holy Spirit has used in all ages. It is no solitary experience that Tatian relates in the second century. Coming to Rome a seeker after truth, weary of philosophy and sick of the religious systems of his times, he came across "certain barbarous writings older than the doctrines of the Greeks, and far too divine to be marked by their errors."[1] These "barbarous writings" — books of the Old Testament and the lives of the early Christians — joined to win Tatian over to the faith of Christ, of which he was henceforth the champion and apologist.

A Teaching Age.

c. This age, with its quickened intellectual life, is certain to be an age memorable in the history of education. It will be a teaching age. Perhaps while the preacher will lose none of his power as a herald, he may come to train himself in this new and necessary art. He must also teach. To this the missionary gives himself "when he translates the Bible, when he instructs the converts in the first essentials of Christianity, when he lays the foundations for Christian institutions, when he trains a native ministry, when he educates the young, and when he fosters general education of the most useful kind."[2] The

[1] Canon Edmonds, The Translation and Distribution of the Bible, p. 8.

[2] Dr. W. N. Clarke, A Study of Christian Missions.

Bible needs to be expounded as well as preached from. It is not so much a repository of texts as it is a treasury of truths. This was one characteristic of the Reformation. Not only was the Bible a herald, it was also a teacher. If with Luther it insisted, with Colet it explained. His method of so dealing with the Scriptures as to make them living books to the men of his times, bringing out the richness and fullness of the teaching that stimulated the spiritual life of his hearers in Oxford, may well bid our preachers to go and do likewise. It is this same Book which was the constant study of Count Tolstoy, who declared that "without the Bible in our society the development of the child or of the man would be as impossible as it would have been in Greek society without Homer."

An Age of Research.

d. Pre-eminently it is likely that our age will be one of research. Perhaps this will distinguish it even more than criticism. The historic value of the Bible is to be tested in the light of our increasing knowledge of the past. Travel will open up buried records. The dust heaps and mounds of extinct civilizations will reveal their hidden treasures. From their deciphered inscriptions the rocks will speak. At the bidding of the explorer the Orient will rise and unveil her face, and open her long-sealed lips. The Bible as an Oriental book of the first importance

is to take on a fresh interest, as round about it quickens this wonderful renaissance. As the book of origins its records will be a thousand times more significant to us and to our children than they were when Tyndale languished in Vilvorde Castle, or even when the revisers sat in the Jerusalem Chamber.

Equally, the study of comparative religions is going to set this Bible in vivid contrast with other sacred books. We shall prize the sanity of its records none the less because we are brought into closer touch with men who in other parts of the world than among the hills and valleys of Palestine felt after God that so they might find Him.

Out of all this will come the survival of the fittest not alone in all the so-called sacred books, but emphatically in this, the one truly sacred Book which is not for an age but for all time.

The Bible will survive unfair critics. It will achieve a still harder task — it will survive unwise friends. Time was when its great words were wrested in order to buttress the claims of the Church and the pretensions of the clergy. This day may never come again. Nor is it likely that the befogged mind of those devotees of the letter that killeth, whose zeal so easily outstrips their knowledge, will ever again bring intelligent men to believe that a more accurate comprehension of the way in which this Book came about will deprive it of its sanctity or divest it of its

authority. It will come to be seen with greater clearness as time passes "that the contents of the Book are more valuable than the vessel which holds them," and that the Book itself "transcends in importance and value the various speculations of men about them, the interpretations which different ages have given them, and all reconstruction of the truth in theological systems and formulas and creeds." [1]

Some things which the early years of the nineteenth century believed about the Bible the twentieth century may be unable to hold. Commentaries prized by our fathers will doubtless lose their value in the estimation of their children. Theological definitions will still change with changes in the thought of the age as they always have; and what seemed the kernel to one generation will seem only the husk to the generation which follows it.[2] But it is impossible to regard with any apprehension the breath of free and candid opinion, provided only that it is not suffered to stagnate into a spirit of unreasonable dogma that shuts out any fresh springtide of new thought. Our Lord Himself, while speaking with the highest authority, constantly challenges the consent of the candid mind. "Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

[1] Dr. Gilman, The Nineteenth Century to the Twentieth, p. 17.

[2] Cf. Spence, Back to Christ, p. 30.

The Influence of the Bible upon National Life.

2. How, let us now ask, in the face of great political changes, will the Bible influence national life?

a. When the nineteenth century dawned the map of Europe was being remodeled. When the twentieth century dawned the remodeling process was being applied to the map of the world. It is no longer the boundaries of France or Prussia or Austria that are under discussion. It is the expansion of these United States. It is the British control of Africa. It is the eastward trend of Russia. It is the very existence of China. Almost it seems as though the westward march of empire had completed its circuit, and were now doubling back on the Orient itself. In the face of these facts this book, so distinctly Oriental in its setting, cannot be regarded with indifference. That it has so largely influenced the world when the hemispheres were parted the one from the other, leads us to anticipate that with these closer relations the influence will be still more marked.

Certainly the Bible has survived the empires with which its early fortunes were bound up. Genesis lives, although Ur of the Chaldees is a region for conjecture only. The idyl of Ruth charms, although Moab be forgotten; the Psalms of David make music for the world, although the slopes of Bethlehem are now heroic only in their memories. The Acts of the Apostles is today the most attractive itinerary of Asia Minor; Miletus

has a name to live solely because there Paul, with tender, touching words, bade farewell to the elders of Ephesus; it is to tread in the footprints of Him who spake as never man spake that the traveler walks the shores of Gennesaret; Athens today holds no spot of wider interest than Mars' Hill; and the great dome of St. Peter's perpetuates the name of the obscure fisherman whom heathen Rome put to death, and catches the eye of the tourist long before he detects the hill of the Capitol or the palaces of the Cæsars. And with all these names the Bible is closely identified.

b. The twentieth century finds much of the civilized world absorbed in the expansion rather than in the preservation of its territory.

The policy of expansion is not here to be discussed, but what is certain is that the territories henceforth to be so largely controlled by the United States must look to us for the Bible. The quickening of national life may outstrip the work of evangelization, but this book will often find its way where no preacher can gain a hearing. And here, at home, as the whole world sends to our shores representatives of its vast and varied nationalities, we are bound to provide for them the Word of life. The tongues which are talked in San Francisco, in Chicago, in New York, leave the many languages of Pentecost far behind; but into them all the same appeal has to be rendered: "Repent and be baptized

every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost."

c. Notice, as you look around in the first flush of the century, that the dominant races are all of them, in name if not in spirit, Christian. As the shackles of superstition fell off from the limbs of enfranchised Europe with the breaking up of the Dark Ages, it was the Bible which proved itself the Book of the people, molding the best life of the Teutonic and Anglo-Saxon races.

More and more we are learning that the form which our religion takes on in any country must harmonize with that country's habits and customs. These are not essential, but "wherever Christ and His gospel are taught the husk of form may change, but the core of eternal truth will remain. It is with that core of truth divine, immortal, of instant and everlasting moment, that the gospel is concerned." [1]

d. In the inevitable growth of culture and civilization which will come with this enlarged national life the Bible will play its part. It will continue to raise the standard of popular morality, to work for that universal suffrage of schooling which is far more important than any other universal suffrage. Still, it will furnish for literature its noblest themes, and for art its most inspiring subjects. Still, as from the days of Moses, it will impregnate law with its lofty spirit of humanity. When the nineteenth century began

[1] Contemporary Review, Dec. 1900, p. 876.

a Bible could not be found in Calcutta; and in Madras, at the opening of a court-martial, as the nearest approach to it, a scrap of an Episcopal Prayer Book was used with which to swear in a witness.[1] It was not the British official but the Christian citizen who revolutionized India for Christ, and made the Bible one of its household possessions. Today, in Africa, the British and Foreign Bible Society has established a depot for the sale of the Scriptures in Omdurman, where General Gordon was massacred; and the representative of the British throne in Khartum took pains to say that the sale of the Scriptures was nowhere in the world forbidden, and would not be forbidden in the Soudan.

The English Language.

e. It cannot have escaped your attention that the spread of the English language is one of the prominent features of our times. The tongue of our childhood, of our homes, of our daily life, of our literature, is becoming familiar in the ear of the world.[2]

f. Still more would I emphasize, among the

[1] Caroline Fox.

[2] In 1800 it was spoken by 21,000,000 people. Now it is spoken by 120,000,000. Russian has advanced in the same period from being spoken by 30,000,000 to be the common tongue of 75,000,000. German spoken in 1800 by 30,000,000 is now spoken by 70,000,000. French has gone up from 30,000,000 to 45,000,000 and Spanish from 27,000,000 to 45,000,000.

influences which this Book will exert over the political changes of the next fifty years, its power to form and develop national character. This is the Book which leads us back to root principles. What other volume has made great men and women as this has? What other volume has put iron in the blood as this has? What other volume as this has set before the statesman and the patriot lofty ideals? It was the Bible which taught John Knox to fear the King of kings, and to fear no other king but him; it was with the Bible that Cromwell and his "Ironsides" flung out their standard at Dundee. It was on the impregnable rock of Scripture that Gladstone planted himself. It was a faith trained in the Bible that made Bismarck confident in the ultimate victory of his Fatherland. Calvinism has had more to do with building up a strong national character than any other system of theology. To quote Doctor Hodge: "It regards divine sovereignty and the human will as the two sides of a roof which come together at a ridgepole above the clouds. A system which denies either has only half a roof over its head." The giant Alps gave John A. Broadus his fitting image, as, traveling under their shadows, he said: "The people who sneer at what is called Calvinism might as well sneer at Mont Blanc." And they might as well sneer at the Bible also, for it was fidelity to this Book which gave to Calvinism alike its sinewy vigor and its imperial authority.

No Bible-loving people, it has with absolute truth been said, was ever permanently enslaved. I believe with Henry Ward Beecher that "The essential elements of Christianity were never so apparent as today, that they were never so influential; that they were never so likely to produce institutions of power; that they never had such a hold on human reason and human conscience; and that the religious impulse of the human race was never so deep, never so strong in its current."

"The prime educator of the conscience," says Bishop Gore, "ought to be the Bible. In the Bible has been the strength of the English character."

"I put a New Testament among your books," Charles Dickens wrote to his son starting out to make his way in the world, "because it is the best book that ever was or will be known in the world, and because it teaches you the best lessons by which any human creature who tries to be truthful and faithful to duty can possibly be guided."

To have this Book circulated among the nations of the earth, to build it into the structure of the new empire, to permeate with it the fresh life stirring all about us at this hour, is our policy as citizens as well as our obligation as Christians.

The Humanity of the Century.

3. These noble words bring to our minds a third force which I hope is to influence our age.

I mean humanity. The signs are abundant that the twentieth century is to be emphatically humane.

Happily it does not fall within my province to dilate on the vast increase of Christendom, and especially of the Christendom nearest to ourselves, in material wealth. Taking this for granted, let us see what follows.

a. I strike no joyous note when I mention, first of all, inevitable national jealousies, feuds, and wars. All history through, the prosperous peoples have been apt to battle for what they have, and then to fight for more. Alas, that we should have to concede that the auguries today forecast but little betterment in this respect! Even here, however, we take heart as we remember that the gospel of reconciliation, humility and forgiveness, which in the first Christian centuries ranged itself against the aggressive materialism of Rome, is still the same. Now, as then, the still, small voice shall be heard above the earthquake and the tempest of human passions; and now, as then, it shall recall the prophet of God to his mission and give to him his message. If war's red-lettered creed is not to die out, its cruelty will certainly be assuaged by the Bible. In the inglorious conflict in South Africa, Briton and Boer united to supply the soldiers with Scriptures. Lord Wolseley, the late commander-in-chief of the British army, wrote, in his preface to the reprint of Cromwell's Soldier's Pocket Bible:

"In my humble opinion, the soldier who carries this Bible in his pack possesses what is of far higher value to him than the proverbial marshal's baton, for if he carries its teaching in his head, and lets it rule his heart and conduct, he will certainly be wholly and most probably eminently successful."

The Democracy of the Bible.

b. The democracy of the Bible is an element in its favor. It is not for one class, or for one nation, or for one race. It is for all sorts and conditions of men. At this hour "People gentle and simple, people endowed with the latest culture, and people plain and unadorned, are found ready to listen, often with great inward comfort and manifest delight, to words taken from a literature part of which dates back nearly three thousand years ago."[1] A return to Christ, in the sound meaning of that over-worked and hardly used phrase, will be a return to the Sermon on the Mount as well as to the Cross. It will be a return to the Bible, because that Book is full of Him. "He is immeasurably greater than the Book that contains the records of what He was; He secures for it a perpetual significance; it can never be that the world will let fall into oblivion the words that described the Son of Man." Of the Gospels we can almost hear Him say: "Because I live ye shall live also."

[1] The Ancient Faith, etc., pp. 74, 198.

c. The Bible — need it be said? — is on the side of humanity. Here we find one element in its permanence. Human nature must change through and through before it ceases to need this book. That it "finds us" as no other book does, is to Coleridge one proof of its divine origin. With what marvelous persistence does it foster and encourage the best that is in us! "We live by admiration, hope and love." It bids us admire the most admirable; cherish within us the hope of immortality; and rejoice in the love of Christ that passeth knowledge. Where else can you walk through such a portrait gallery of high-minded faces, from Abraham standing up before his dead, to Paul writing his matchless letter to Philemon? Where else shall the reformer listen to such passionate pleas on behalf of the poor and the outcast and the oppressed as burn on the lips of the Hebrew prophet? Where, as in this Book, can you find the power which can make mercy temper justice in the administration of law? The truest feelings of our human nature respond to the spirit of the Bible. A yearning to make its lofty standard the measure of our conduct comes back at times to the men of highest mind and noblest imagination with all the pathos of the lost chord. "I would give a great deal," declared John Addington Symonds, "to regain the Christian point of view." To attain to this is the constant ambition and effort of the best of men in their best moods.

Even the man who was more fascinated by the old pagan spirit than any of his contemporaries, Walter Pater, found a comfort in reciting the Psalms in his hours of doubt, which not the noblest Roman poet could afford him, and died with a little book of prayer in his hand, given him by his mother when he was a child, and which had been his constant companion in all his wanderings.

d. While it is true to the best that is in us, the philanthropy of the Bible is wholesome and vigorous. It is not fanciful. Nowhere does it expose itself to Horace Bushnell's censure: "There is no nerve in a gospel of mere speculation." With inerrant accuracy it draws the line, invisible to so many modern reformers, between sentiment and sentimentality. It is never feeble or flaccid. It rests not so much on love for the individual as on love for the whole human family.

What spectacle in all the centuries past was more impressive than that which was presented by the absolute devotion of the native Christians in China? The brutal and ignorant hate of their persecutors moved them only to prayer. The prospect of suffering and death was one which they beheld through eyes suffused with tears such as Jesus shed above the doomed Jerusalem. In one instance a band of eighteen colporteurs carrying the Bible to their countrymen were warned of the risk which they ran in persisting

in their mission. Not one of them blanched or shrank from the martyrdom awaiting him. "We go," said they, "on a colportage tour. God's will be done." And from that tour only four returned alive. An example such as this, which draws not its language alone but its very spirit from Calvary, will be a mighty power in commending to China the gospel of divine love.

e. The Bible, we say, is on the side of humanity. The converse is also true. Humanity is on the side of the Bible. In all the great crises of Bible history, with Savonarola in Florence, with Wycliffe at Lutterworth, with Tyndale in Antwerp, with Luther in Wittenberg, with Knox in Edinburgh, the heart of the people has never failed to beat in unison with the Bible. In the teeth of priests and potentates they have demanded that the Word of God be not bound.

Among all the schemes which are being floated at this hour for the betterment of the masses who herd together in a life to which grace and beauty are denied, and where indeed only by a severe struggle can purity retain her whiteness and virtue her honest blush, it is safe to predict that only disappointment and defeat await those which deny to the Bible a place among their books, and refuse to count the sword of the Spirit as one of the weapons of their warfare. This Book must be heard at the bar of our crowded life pleading for the rights of man, demanding that we should respond to the challenge of God, our common

Father, in tones more tender than those of Cain, when he cried: "Am I my brother's keeper?" In the counsels of the new and noble philanthropy which is growing up about such of our churches as are planted in the centers of teeming life, in the experiments which in the slums of our great cities are aiming to make the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose, the Bible — unless the history of the twentieth century belie the experience of the century which has preceded it — will be a powerful influence in promoting cleaner lives, and kindlier feelings, and sweeter and saner relations between man and man. Until he ceases to sin, until he ceases to be a creature desiring to know about the God who made him, until he ceases to inquire whence he came and whither he goes, until then the Bible will continue to be of abiding significance to every generation of men.

The Bible and the Demands of the Soul.

4. We have now glanced at three of the strong forces which confront us. Each of them, we have seen, will increase the spread and augment the influence of the Bible. But not all of them combined could compensate for the lack of the last great power to which I turn. The question with every age is still the question with ours. The auguries are hopeful that this new century shall be marked by a rich spiritual life. The quickening of the pulse of the civilized world

must have its influence upon the religious fervor of our times. It is impossible that these powers which are to furnish our Bible with new apparatus and new leverage should not act and react on the life which, while it is hid with Christ in God, yet at the same time draws so much of its vigor from the human channels through which it flows. Side by side with the aggressive spirit of the Church, do we not detect today a passionate longing for a spiritual quickening? Yes; the question of all others which needs to be answered is, Will the Bible continue to respond to the demands of the soul?

a. That it has never failed to do this is in itself a reason for anticipating that it never will. That "even in the very thick of what are called the Dark Ages there never failed a succession of godly people whose best life was fed from the life of God in the Scriptures"[1] every student of history may learn for himself. Others beside Max Müller in their dislike of religious controversy have fallen back on the simple faith which they drew many years ago from a mother's lips. Unshaken by hostile criticisms of the Bible, they have felt that nothing could deprive them of what they themselves have heard and seen and handled of the Word of life. Max Müller says:

"I had little to carry, no learned impedimenta to safeguard my faith. If a man possess this one pearl of great price he may save himself and

[1] The Ancient Faith, etc., p. 72.

his treasure, but neither the tinseled vestments of a cardinal nor the triple tiara that crowns the head of the church will serve as life-belts in the gales of doubt and controversy."

That this book has met the cry of the soul in a hundred hours of trial and when everything else failed, is no mean argument in favor of its doing so in continuance. Gladstone wrote in his old age:

"If I am asked what is the remedy for the sorrows of the heart — what a man should chiefly look to in his progress through life as the power that is to sustain him under trials, and enable him manfully to confront his afflictions, I must point to something which in a well-known hymn is called 'The Old, Old Story,' told in an old, old Book, and taught with an old, old teaching which is the greatest and best gift ever given to mankind."

b. To an age of doubt the "Thus saith the Lord" of the Old Testament, the "I say unto you" of the New, will not cease to be refreshing. Here is a book which has in it no speculative note. On the contrary, it is dogmatic. And the very spirit that draws men from the churches which discuss and debate to the church which professes to be infallible, in its healthier moods longs for positive assurance, not from the lips of any church but from the mouth of God himself. This is what moved Thomas Carlyle to credit the Bible with possessing this special property, that

it is "written under the eye of the Eternal; that it is of a sincerity like very death, through which, as through a window divinely opened, all men could look into the stillness of eternity, and discern in glimpses their far-distant, long-forgotten home." True it is not upon its claim so much as upon its contents that this book takes its stand; and yet its claim to be God's word to man, sustained by its contents, in its turn gives to those contents a lustrous significance which otherwise would be lacking.

c. And still, up to this moment when I speak, is it not true that the Bible does respond to the deepest that is in us? Still, as when the psalmist sang, deep crieth unto deep — the deep of human sin to the deep of divine forgiveness, the deep of human need to the deep of divine sufficiency. What great souls, such as Augustine and Luther and Pascal and Bunyan, discovered in their strenuous, spiritual hours, lowlier souls are still finding in every age and land. The Bible answers, as does no other book, to the craving of the soul for pardon and peace, for light and leading. You must create for us another man before we need another Bible.

The Stimulation of Spiritual Life.

d. Moreover, as nothing else does, the Bible stimulates spiritual life. To open its covers is to rouse the mind to think, the heart to feel, the conscience to arraign, the soul to aspire. That

saintly philanthropist George Müller, friend and father to multitudes of orphans, in his experience gives us our own:

"The vigor of our spiritual life will be in exact proportion to the place held by the Bible in our life and thoughts. I can solemnly state this from the experience of fifty-four years. Though engaged in the ministry of the Word I neglected for four years the consecutive reading of the Bible. I was a babe in knowledge and in grace. I made no progress because I neglected God's own appointed means for nourishing the divine life. But I was led to see that the Holy Spirit is the instructor, and the Word the medium by which he teaches. Spending three hours on my knees, I made such progress that I learned more in those three hours than in years before. In July, 1829, I began this plan of reading from the Old and New Testament. I have read since then the Bible through one hundred times, and each time with increasing delight. When I begin it afresh, it always seems like a new book. I cannot tell you how great has been the blessing from consecutive, diligent, daily study. I have always made it a rule never to begin work till I have had a good season with God, and then I throw myself, with all my heart, into this work for the day, with only a few minutes' interval for prayer."

This power to quicken the life of the soul is the glory of the Bible. As a boy Augustine hears

of the humility of Christ condescending to the pride of man; and through all the years of his own intellectual rebellion he cannot shake the memory off. Baxter plants his parish with Bibles, and Kidderminster from a place of shameful profligacy becomes a garden of the Lord. Here, by his own confession, Charles Darwin enters a region where his rare scientific acumen avails him nothing. "Spiritual powers," says he, "cannot be compared or classed by the naturalist." "It is astonishing," Spurgeon says, "how much a man may know of the Bible by learning a text a day, and how much he may know experimentally by watching the events of the day and interpreting them in the light of the text."

e. Today the Bible responds to the prevailing belief in the unity of God. The march of the centuries is ever forward toward a world-wide acceptance of monotheism. This was the Hebrew faith, which spoke to Moses in the burning bush in the wilderness, and by the firmness with which it was held and the clearness with which it was preached, you can measure the growth or decline of the Hebrew people. For the Bible to reach any heathen land today, is for this great central truth to sound the death-knell of idolatry, as certainly as did the preaching of Paul in Athens declare that, with its strong insistence on the one God in whom all live and move and have their being, the polytheism of the old world must pass away.

f. But in revealing the unity of God, this book also reveals the unity of man, and his close relation to his Creator. That God should give His Son for us ceases to perplex us when we believe in Him as Creator and so loving man; and as father and so akin to man. Man is never for a moment regarded by this Book apart from this high origin and this endearing relationship.

The Bible Repays Study.

g. That the Bible with such a mission to our common humanity invites and repays careful and systematic study should go without saying. "My brother," writes Edward Irving, "no man is furnished for the ministry till he can unclasp his pocket Bible, and, wherever it opens, discourse from it largely and spiritually to the people." [1] Epistle and Gospel and prophecy and psalm "become instinct with life when a living man takes it in hand and holds it up to the light." To his congregation in London, one day, Joseph Parker said: "I spend nearly the whole of my life in making marginal notes upon my study Bible, and it is to me very profitable reading. That to me is the most valuable book I have ever attempted — to take my heart and set it on the margin of the Bible, verse by verse."

h. Dowered with this spiritual power, the Bible may precede other agencies for converting

[1] Mrs. Oliphant's Life of Edward Irving, p. 396.

the world to Christ. It may pave the way for them. Long before Jesus was born, the Septuagint put the Scriptures within reach of the heathen; and at a time when the Jewish nation was under a cloud, and when thick darkness covered all other people, it planted in the hearts of men the hope of the dawn.[1] The Bible rather than Wycliffe deserves to be called "The Day Star of the Reformation." Not the translator, but the translation, is the subject of Wordsworth's great lines:

> But to outweigh all harm, the sacred book
> In dusty sequestration wrapt too long
> Assumes the accent of our native tongue;
> And he who guides the plow or wields the crook
> With understanding spirit now may look
> Upon her records, listen to her song,
> And sift her laws.

Persecution wiped out Christianity in Madagascar, but hidden in their turbans devout believers carried their Bibles. A copy of the Bible bought by a native and carried back to his country home, is the means of the conversion of a whole village in Brazil. A copy found in a cast-off garment leads numbers in a Chinese village into the truth. Similar stories might be told of every quarter of the globe. The Word of God is its own witness, and in its printed form becomes a messenger of the gospel.

[1] Barnes, Two Thousand Years of Missions before Carey, p. 25.

Among the ruins of Pompeii a phial of water was once found. For nearly two thousand years it had remained there, since the day when the city was buried in the ashes of Vesuvius. But the water, when once again it saw the light, was still pure and sweet. So with this Book. It is perennial. Age cannot wither nor custom stale its infinite variety. "Truth," as said Lord Bacon, "from any other source is like water from a cistern, but truth drawn out of the Bible is like drinking water from a fountain immediately where it springeth." And it is all-sufficient. The poetry of George Herbert may halt, but his piety treads with confident step, as he sings:

> The Bible? That 's the book, the book indeed,
> The Book of books
> On which who looks
> As he should do, aright, shall never need
> Wish for a better light
> To guide him in the night.

In one of the galleries of Europe there hung a picture bearing the title "The Peaceful Highway," a bridge crossing a stream which parted the one half of an English village from the other. Centuries have glided away since the foundations of that bridge were laid, since its strong buttresses were set to breast the water. Successive generations have passed across it from infancy to old age. Again and again has spring swollen the stream which in summer ran translucent and shallow. But the bridge has endured. These

Scriptures, "letters," as Augustine calls them, "letters from our heavenly country," are just such a peaceful highway, and today the steps of the world's need and sin and hope and despair and prayer and praise have not ceased to tread it from the cradle to the grave. They never shall.

Our century opened with a quickened intellectual life. That shall make the Book clearer and therefore dearer than ever to us. It opened with broader prospects for the world of action. That shall discover fresh avenues for this Book to the hearts of the great human family. Our century, let us hope and believe, is waking also to a new and truer conception of human brotherhood. This Book shall knit us closer to one another. Finally, our century opened with a rich promise of spiritual life. This Book shall make that life more affluent and precious. "The Lord," in John Robinson's memorable phrase, "has more truth yet to break forth from His holy word." To his students, John A. Broadus left no richer legacy than his parting words: "Young gentlemen, if this were the last time I should meet you, I should feel amply repaid for consuming the whole hour in endeavoring to impress upon you these two things, true piety, and, like Apollos, to be men 'mighty in the Scriptures,' 'mighty in the Scriptures,' 'mighty in the Scriptures,'"

The signs of the times are urgent in demanding a knowledge of the Bible far wider and more thorough than exists at present among the

churches and schools of our land. Were there time, it might be well for us to inquire whether the Bible is as familiar to the people of our country today as it was to the peasants and apprentices of England in the days of Queen Elizabeth.

"My only hope," said Gladstone, looking back over a strenuous life and speaking as a statesman and as a philanthropist not less than as a Christian, "my only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind into contact with divine revelation." How shall this be done? No longer by great scholars alone, or by historic churches, or by the mighty influence of mighty kings and conquerors. Today, as Canon Edmonds insisted when speaking before the Ecumenical Conference in New York:

"It is the common task of Christendom, and the lowly and loftier alike are members of this greatest of cooperative societies. All missionary work will eventually be tested by the conformity of its result to the divine model of life and character set before us in the holy Book. No missionary is better employed than the competent translator. No missionary society has fully risen to its ideal which has not contributed a man or men to this great Pentecostal revelation of the mind of God to the heart of His creatures. Between us all, we reckon over four hundred of these divine voices, and none of them is without signification. Each of them bears witness to the

love that God hath to us; each bears witness also that no race or language is now common or unclean."

The Choicest Heritage.

Surely this is the conclusion of the whole matter. The Bible must be put foremost in our preaching. Biblical exposition must regain its ascendency in the pulpit. The Bible must be in the hands of our congregations. Bible reading must again be the rule and not the exception in our pews. The Bible must be found in our Sunday-schools. Not lesson helps, but the Book itself must be the basis of devout and earnest and intelligent study. The Bible, in some form, must be as familiar to our public schools as are the other classics of our literature. Once more, as in the days of Pilgrim and Puritan, it must be counted the choicest heritage of the nation. With the living church does it lie to see that all this is done. I am confident that the appeal to those who themselves have tasted of this good Word of life will not be in vain.

If the forecast which I have taken in this chapter be correct, we have nothing to fear, but only everything to hope, as to the Bible in the twentieth century. With each fresh year in the century's history the Bible will renew its youth. Is the world ready for the Bible as never before? As never before the Bible is ready for the world. Were there ever so many golden gates of oppor-

tunity wide open as at this hour? Never as at this hour was the Bible so splendidly equipped for entering these gates. The supply is adequate to the demand. And as nothing else it answers and satisfies the demand.

We search the world for truth; we cull
The good, the pure, the beautiful,
From graven stone and written scroll,
From all old flower fields of the soul;
And weary seekers of the best,
We come back laden from our quest,
To find that all the ages said
Is in the book our mothers read.

III

The Bible the Hope of the World

JAMES ORR

The Bible influences the world through the many-sided revelations of God's character and will it contains; it specially influences it through the historical image, and the moral and spiritual teaching, of Christ in the Gospels, and through the hopes, promises, exhortations, and motives, in which the Apostolic writings abound. We speak with gratitude of the profound influence which has been exercised on the world by Christianity. But it is to be remembered that Christianity comes to men, and is kept alive in their memories and hearts, only through the Bible — through the possession, translation, diffusion, and devout and prayerful reading, preaching, study, and teaching of the written Word. Without the Bible to revert to, keeping the truth fresh and living, the image of the Master would long since have been blurred and distorted beyond recognition. His Gospel would have been perverted beyond recovery by corrupt human tradition. His doctrines and moral teaching, with those of His

Apostles, would have been buried under a mountain-load of human inventions.

It is not, therefore, an exaggeration to say that it is the Bible which has preserved Christianity to the world. If, as we believe, the religion of Jesus is the hope of the world, it is the possession of the Bible conveying and maintaining the knowledge of that religion, which makes the hope possible. In saying that Christianity is the hope of the world, and that the Bible is the hope of the world, we use nearly equivalent expressions.

Comparison with the Sacred Books of Other Religions.

A powerful argument for the divineness of the Bible might be drawn from a simple comparison of the Bible with the sacred books of other religions. There is a large group of religions in the world which students of the subject are accustomed to designate "book-religions" — this for the reason that they possess, like our own, sacred books or scriptures. Such books are the Hindu Vedas, the Parsee Zend-Avesta, the Tripitakas and other sacred writings of the Buddhists, the Mohammedan Koran. Whatever light of wisdom or gleams of truth about God and duty such books contain — and we need grudge to them no real "gems" of this kind they possess — there is, as every candid judge will be ready to admit, no true comparison between these ethnic scrip-

tures, even at their best, and the collection of writings which we term pre-eminently the Bible — *the* Book. Whether they be regarded as literature, as history, or as means of conveying messages of truth, the unique superiority of the Bible stands out unchallengeable.

Take the Bible, for instance, as history. It is the simple fact that there is nothing that can be properly called history in these other sacred books of the world. They are, as every student of them knows, for the most part jumbles of heterogeneous material, loosely placed together, without order, continuity, or unity of any kind. There is no order, progress, or real connection of parts. The Koran, *e. g.,* is a miscellany of disjointed pieces, loosely placed together, arranged chiefly in order of length. The Bible, on the other hand, is a history with a beginning, a middle, and an end; a history of revelation; the history of a developing purpose of God, working up to a goal in the full-orbed discovery of the will of God for man's salvation in His Son Jesus Christ. There is nothing like this, nothing even approaching it, in any other collection of sacred books in the world.

As distinctive in its character is the message of the Bible. The Bible is not a book of mere secular wisdom, though much secular knowledge is embodied in it; not a book merely of grand thoughts about religion, or of theories and speculations about divine things; not a book simply

of fine ethical teaching, of noble biography, of soul-stirring narrative. It is, as just said, pre-eminently a book of revelation; of God's historic revelations down through the ages to the coming of Christ and the advent of the Spirit. These revelations form a crisis. Each adds something to those which went before; each carries the course of revelation a little further; each foreshadows a yet richer development in the future; and when the whole is before us, we see in it the unfolding of a great purpose which has its consummation in Christ and His redemption — a purpose the very character of which is the guarantee to us that it is the purpose of God, not the thought of man.

The Claim of History and Influence.

This imperfect glance suffices to show the uniqueness of the Bible, and the inestimable treasure we possess in it. We are now to see how the Bible verifies its exceptional character and claims by its history and influence, and by the blessings it confers.

It is not too much to say that the Bible, regarded simply as a book, has had an unexampled place in history. Its authors were not learned men, as the world counts learning; yet their writings have been preserved, read, copied, translated, and spread abroad to the utmost corners of the earth, as no works of philosophers or sages, poets or orators, historians or moralists,

have ever been. Take the witness of manuscripts. While of some important classical works only one manuscript is known to exist, and ten or fifteen is thought a large number for others — few of these dating beyond the tenth century of our era — the manuscripts of whole or parts of the New Testament are already reckoned by thousands, the oldest of which go back to the fourth and fifth centuries, and parts are still older.

Or take the test of translation as a mark of this book's influence. It is no uncommon thing for a popular book to be translated into many languages. Here, again, however, the Bible has a record which casts every other into the shade. The books of the New Testament had hardly been put together in the second century in what we call the Canon before we find translations made of them into Latin and Syriac and Egyptian, and by-and-by into Gothic and other barbarous tongues. In the Middle Ages, notwithstanding the discouragements put upon the possession and reading of the Scriptures, we find translations made into nearly all the leading languages of Europe. With the art of printing the work of translation received a new impetus. Today there is not a language in the civilized world, hardly a language among uncivilized tribes of any importance, into which this marvelous book has not been rendered. Whatever man may say of decay of faith in the Bible, it

is, as remarked earlier, the undeniable fact that its circulation in the different countries and languages of the world today outstrips all previous records. The reports, *e. g.*, of the three great Bible Societies — the British and Foreign, the American, and the National Bible Society of Scotland — show for the year 1905 the enormous total of over 9,000,000 of issues of the whole or parts of the Scriptures in European and in Eastern lands!

Every other test we can apply to the Bible yields a similar result. No book has ever been so minutely studied, has had so many books written on it, has given birth to so many commentaries and works of exposition, has evoked such keen discussion, has founded so vast a literature of hymns, liturgies, works of devotion, has been so determinedly assailed, has rallied such splendid defenses, as the Bible!

Why do I mention these things? Not merely for their own interest as facts, but as proofs of the unconquerable vitality which resides in this book, of the universal appeal it makes to human hearts, and of the need of ascribing the power it exercises to some higher than neutral cause. Genius alone in the writers, even if they were allowed to take rank as men of genius, would not explain it. What boasts are sometimes made of the genius and scholarship ranged against the Bible! Yet, as I said at the commencement, the Bible holds on its career of conquest unchecked,

[1] Critiques and Addresses, p. 61.

while the works of its assailants, after a generation or two — often much less time — lie on the shelves unread. These books have no message to the world, as the Bible has. The Bible is a book, as experience shows, for all races; and it has this character because, like the Gospel it enshrines, it goes down beneath all differences of rank, age, sex, culture, to that which is deepest, most universal in man. It bears translation into all languages, because the language of the deepest things of the soul is, all the world over, one.

This vital penetrative character of the Bible, attesting its divine quality, shows itself not simply in the place it holds in history, but in the unexampled character of the influence it has been enabled to exert. To tell what the Bible has been and done for the world would be to rewrite in large part the history of modern civilization; to re-tell the story of Christian missions, including those which brought the Gospel to our own shores; to extract the finest qualities in much of our best literature; to lay bare the inner springs of the lives of those who have labored best and most for the moral and spiritual well-being of their kind. Trace back to their springs the great movements, the great struggles for civil and religious liberty, in our own and other lands, the social and humanitarian movements which were the distinction of the past century, the sources will be found ultimately in the high mountain levels of the Bible's teaching. And say

what men will, it is the Bible which is the source of our highest social and national aspirations still.

The Testimony of Huxley.

I shall return immediately, with more particularity, to the proof of these statements. But I may here cite the witness of one who will not, I think, be regarded as unduly biased in favor of the Bible — I mean Professor Huxley.

Secularist and agnostic as he was, Professor Huxley, on more than one occasion, expressed himself in very remarkable terms on this unparalleled influence of the Bible. Here is one of his latest utterances:

"Throughout the history of the Western world," he says, "the Scriptures, Jewish and Christian, have been the greatest instigators of revolt against the worst forms of clerical and political despotism. The Bible has been the Magna Charta of the poor, and of the oppressed; down to modern times no State has had a constitution in which the interests of the people are so largely taken into account, in which the duties, so much more than the privileges, of rulers are insisted upon, as that drawn up for Israel in Deuteronomy and Leviticus; nowhere is the fundamental truth that the welfare of the State, in the long run, depends on the uprightness of the citizen so strongly laid down. Assuredly the Bible talks no trash about the rights of man;

but it insists upon the equality of duties, on the liberty to bring about that righteousness which is somewhat different from struggling for 'rights'; on the fraternity of taking thought for one's neighbor as for one's self." [1]

Here is another passage. Arguing in one of his essays for the reading of the Bible in the schools, Professor Huxley bids us consider "that for three centuries this Book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history; that it has become the national epic of Britain . . . that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of mere literary form"; and he asks, "By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized, and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval between two eternities, and earns the blessings or the curses of all times, according to its efforts to do good and hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work?" [1]

Are not statements like these the best reply to such strictures on the "narrowness" of Christian ethics? Can a religion be really regarded as inimical to political freedom, to duties of citizenship, to education, to patriotism, which produces results like the above?

[1] Essays upon Some Controverted Questions, Prologue, pp. 52–53.

The World's Debt to the Bible.

Let me now trace a little more in detail some of the actual blessings which the world owes to the Bible. For practical purposes, the influence of the Bible and the influence of Christianity are, as I have said, convertible ideas. It will be convenient for me to speak, first, of what the world owes to the religion of Christ in a temporal respect — on the plane of moral and social benefit; then of what the world owes to it in a spiritual respect, or in regard to its eternal hopes.

There are, I know very well, and we are never allowed to forget it, two sides to this picture. Deeds have been done in the name of Christ, and of His official Church, which reflect eternal dishonor upon humanity. It is a dark picture the historian has to draw of the abounding corruption, the dead formalism, the gross immorality of certain ages of the Church; of the frightful evils of the periods of Roman and Byzantine ascendency; of the spirit of intolerance and persecution directed against heretics and unbelievers, and often against Christ's own faithful witnesses, when truth had to be confessed in peril of the dungeon and the stake; of superstitions like witchcraft; of the feuds and divisions of churches and sects; of the moral blots, the inconsistencies, the festering sores of vice and misery, of our so-called Christian civilizations. We acknowledge it all, and blush in the acknowl-

edgment. To dwell on such things is the stock in trade of the anti-Christian agitator. But in this he is unjust. A fair mind will always distinguish — or try to distinguish — between effects really due to the spirit and principles of Christ's religion, and the false and perverted readings of that religion given by those who had nothing in common with its spirit, and made it too often the engine of their own temporal ambitions. Much human infirmity and folly must be stripped off if we are to do justice to this religion as it lies before us in the Bible. To Christ himself we appeal, as against the people who deny Him.

If, then, we look to the Gospel as it came forth in its purity from the lips of Christ Himself and of His apostles, what do we find it teaching? What ideas did it communicate to the world? I look at the subject, first, as proposed from the standpoint of moral and social benefit.

The World into which Christianity Came.

To understand what the religion of the Bible has accomplished, we have to think of the kind of world into which Christianity entered. It found a world in the last stage of dissolution — in a state of utter decrepitude and decay. The old religions had lost their power, and with religion the foundations of morals were well-nigh universally loosened. Dissoluteness flooded society. Even duty to the State — the one duty that was held supreme — was breaking up in all

directions. There was little sense of individual right. In the family, *e. g.*, the father held all power in his own hands, and wife and children and slaves were subject to his absolute authority. Infanticide and exposure of children were common and recognized practices. The social structure was built on slavery, and slaves had no protection of any kind. Work was held to be beneath the dignity of citizens, who, if not possessed of wealth, claimed to be supported by the State. The favorite amusements of the populace were the sanguinary spectacles of the amphitheater. Marriage had fallen into such disuse that, though the emperors set a premium on marriage, people could hardly be induced to enter into the bond. Worse than all, heathen society had not within itself — nor was it able to find — any principle of regeneration, for religion had lost its hold, the moral codes of the philosophers were without sufficient sanction, and there were not those ideas of the dignity and worth of the individual which could create any noble or sustained efforts on his behalf. Noble examples of virtue, no doubt, there still were; friendship, piety of a sort, family affections, a deploring on the part of the better spirits of the evils they could do nothing to check or subdue. But ancient civilization had played itself out in both thought and life, and had not a spring of renewal from which recovery could come.

What did Christianity Bring?

What now did Christianity bring to this effete and sinking heathenism?

It brought for one thing a totally new idea of man himself as a being of infinite dignity and immortal worth. It taught that every man, as made in God's image, and capable of eternal life, had an infinite value — a value which made it worth while for God's own Son to die for him. It taught that no man was worthless in God's sight; that every man, however lost in sin, was redeemable, and that no efforts should be spared for his redemption. It brought back the well-nigh lost sense of responsibility and accountability to God. It breathed into the world a new spirit of love and charity — something wonderful in the eyes of the heathen, who looked on in amazement as they saw institutions growing up around them such as paganism had never heard of; institutions for the care of the poor, the orphan, the aged, the helpless, the fallen, the leper; that wealth of charitable and beneficent institutions with which Christian lands are full.[1] It flashed into men's souls a new moral ideal, and set up a standard of truth, integrity, and purity, which has acted as an elevating force on moral

[1] Cf. Lecky's History of European Morals, I., p. 412; II., pp. 84–91, 107. Uhlhorn's Christian Charity in the Ancient Church. "It has covered the globe," says Lecky, "with countless institutions of mercy, absolutely unknown in the whole pagan world" (II., p. 91; cf. p. 107). Thirty years ago hospitals were unknown in Japan.

conceptions till this hour. It restored woman to her rightful place by man's side as his spiritual helpmate and equal. It taught care for the children, and created that best of God's blessings on earth, the Christian home. It taught the slave his spiritual freedom as a member of the Kingdom of God; gave him an equal place with his master in the Church; and struck at the foundations of slavery by its doctrines of the natural brotherhood and dignity of man. It created self-respect, and a sense of duty in the use of one's powers for self-support and the benefit of others; urged to honest labor; and in a myriad ways, by direct teaching, by the protest of holy lives, and by its general spirit, struck at the evils, the corruptions, the malpractices, and cruelties of the time.

In all these and in numberless other ways that cannot now be mentioned, Christianity, as impartial investigators recognize, entered as a revolutionizing, regenerating, and renewing principle into that ancient society, and produced effects which have borne fruit in the new world that has sprung up on the ruins of the old.

Christianity the Basis of Modern Civilization.

Once the ideas I have mentioned had been introduced, and had taken possession of the world, they liberated other forces, and gave birth to new ideas, which have cooperated with them in advancing the progress of the race; but no

one who goes to the bottom of what is distinctive of our modern civilization will deny that the ideas I have named are the basis on which our modern civilization rests, nor will any one deny that, however self-evident some of them may now seem to us, it was Christianity which practically put the world in possession of them, and still sustains them in men's minds as living convictions.

These ideas are now, in large part, I say, the common possession of mankind. They exist and operate far beyond the limits of the visible Church. They have been taken up and contended for by men outside the Church — unbelievers even — when the Church itself had become unfaithful to them. But none the less are they of Christian parentage. They are the principles of the Bible — of the Gospel. They lie at the basis of our modern assertion of equal rights; of rights of conscience; of justice to the individual in social and State arrangements; of the desire for brotherhood and peace and amity among classes and nations. It is the Christian leaven that is fermenting, sometimes in turbid enough forms, in all this social seething we see going on around us; Christian ideas which are propelling the race on in its march of progress; Christian love which is sustaining the best and purest and most self-sacrificing efforts to raise the fallen, rescue the drunkard, and make the condition of the race happier and better. And if the Christian root of these ideas and efforts were withdrawn, it

would be seen how many of them would come to be laughed at as baseless ideals, and a very different range of ideas and motives would take their place; how, in their race for riches, lust for pleasure, and greed of power, men would be willing to trample the poor and helpless under their feet, if only they could by that means raise themselves a little higher.

We thus see that, even in a temporal respect, the Bible and its teachings are the grand civilizing agency of the world. The experience of the past proves it. Christian missions, with their benign effects in the spread of education, the checking of social evils and barbarities, the creation of trade and industry, the change in the status of women, the advance in the social and civilized life generally, prove it. We are still far enough from the goal, God knows. But contrast ancient pagan with modern society, with all its faults, and mark how far we have already traveled; contrast Christian nations with nations yet in the night of heathenism — even with such lands as India and China — and note the contrast in the life of today; take the Christian nations themselves, and see how it is those that have drunk most deeply into the Spirit of Christ, that most revere His word, respect His day, and observe most purely His worship, that stand foremost in all the elements that constitute true progress — foremost in enlightenment, in wealth, in virtue, in social order and happiness; take, finally, the

godly and godless classes in the same society, and mark how the tone of our public life and the stability of our institutions are strengthened by the former, and are daily put in jeopardy by the latter!

"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil" (Prov. 8:13); and in proportion as that fear spreads itself through a community, the community will be stable, progressive, prosperous. Given a Bible-reading, Bible-loving people, and it will not be long before such a people is found well-housed, well-clothed, industrious, and content; before the demons of drink and poverty disappear from its towns; before schools and colleges spring up to educate its children; before all the tokens of a genuine prosperity are visible within its borders.

The Message of Religion and Eternal Hope.

Thus far I have been speaking of the temporal advantages accruing from the religion of the Bible. But the chief blessing of the possession of the Bible is not told till we speak of what the world owes to it in a religious respect, and in regard to its eternal hopes. The two things are connected, for the moral reforms wrought by Christianity can never be dissociated from its religious ideas. Nothing elevates the mind or raises the affections so much as right thoughts of God. In the light of his relation to God, man attains to the sense of his dignity and worth as a moral being, and feels that life has an end

which makes it worth living. The chief gain of the Bible, therefore, is still untold when we speak only of its literary and moral and civilizing effects. It is not disclosed till we think of its message of the love of God, and that light of eternal hope which streams from it into a world which, despite all speculations of reason, and brilliance of civilization, would be hopelessly dark as respects the future without it.

It is the Bible which gives the knowledge of God. I need not do more than lift a corner of the veil which at this distance of time hides from us the condition of the ancient world in a religious respect. What a spectacle of ignorance of the true God and of the way of life it is which presents itself! In one place it is the sun, moon, and planets which are the objects of worship. Elsewhere, as in Egypt, temples are built to four-footed beasts and creeping things of the earth (cf. Rom. 1:23). In other places, as in India, the great natural objects — the sky, the dawn, the rain, the rivers, fire, etc. — are the favorite deities. In Greece men adore gods sculptured in forms of human beauty. In Rome gods of all countries are swept together, and worship is paid to them. Round the roots of these religions clung innumerable superstitions; the rites of many of them were licentious and revolting; in the service of gods of lust and gods of wine, the most shameful orgies were enacted. Where, from the list of these heathen gods, or

in the stories told of them, could men get one idea to elevate them, one impulse to raise them above themselves to nobler life? When Plato sketched an ideal Republic, his first concern was to banish the myths of the gods out of it.[1] Think of England when the light of Christianity first broke upon it. Druid priests chant their mysterious songs, go through their mystic ceremonies in dim forest recesses, plunge the sacrificial knife into shrieking human victims. The tribes who supplant them bring over their wild Scandinavian traditions; sing the praises of Thor and Odin; revel in the prospect of a Valhalla, where they will drink blood from the skulls of their slain enemies! Look at the lands which lie even yet in the shadow of death of heathenism. See their lords many and their gods many, their cruel practices, their revolting superstitions. As every student of social progress knows, their false religions rest on these lands with the weight of an incubus, and there can be no real progress till this incubus is shaken off.

It is the poet Milton who in his great Ode on the Nativity has described the dire consternation in the ranks of the heathen deities at the announcement of the birth of Christ. Christ came, and as His religion spread, the vapors of a dense heathen superstition rolled away before it, and gave place to a purer faith and to a nobler worship. Corruption, as we know, early

[1] Republic, Bk. II.

seized on Christianity also, and in the course of centuries attained huge proportions. But we know, too, how, from time to time, as at the Reformation, through the force of that vitality within it, which is but another name for the abiding presence of God's Spirit in its midst, Christianity has risen up, and thrown the worst of these corruptions off, and come forth stronger and purer than before. It is the Bible which in every case has been the instrument of God's Spirit in these reformations. It is the same Bible which has been the agency in that long series of historical revivals by which the Church has once and again been saved in days of stagnation and unbelief. Without the Bible not one of these great changes would have been brought about.

And how marvelous the results! To the Gospel of Christ we owe it that we ourselves are not today worshiping rocks and stones, but are bowing in acknowledgment of the one God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is above all and in all. It was Christianity that, in the early centuries, overthrew the reign of the gods and goddesses of Greece and Rome, and swept them so entirely from faith and history that no one now so much as dreams of the possibility of the revival of their worship. It was Christianity that, still retaining something of its youthful energy, laid hold of the rough, barbarian peoples that overran Europe, and, with the Bible's

aid, trained and molded them to some kind of civilization and moral life. It was Christianity that, in Scotland, lighted a light in the monasteries of Iona and other places, that by-and-by spread its beams through every part of the country. Just as today it is Christianity that is teaching the idolaters to burn their idols, to cease their horrid practices, to worship the true God, and take upon them the obligations of decent and civilized existence.

The Bible and the Future Life.

As it is with the knowledge of God, so is it with hope for the future. The ancient world was as much in the darkness about a future life as it was about the being and character of God, and what notions it had were perplexed, confused, and erroneous in the extreme. But Christ, as He came from God and went to God, has shed a new light into the depths of the Unseen, and, by His own Resurrection, has opened the gates of a new and assured hope to mankind (I Peter 1:3). The lesson of all history is that, apart from the Bible, and this hope which it contains, the world but gropes in darkness, and wanders into deeper and ever deeper uncertainty, from the scepticism in which ancient Rome and Greece ended, to the unconcealed agnosticism, and deeper than agnosticism, the pessimism, under the depressing influence of which our modern age groans.

Take a single illustration. I took up lately a work of fiction — a book written, its lately deceased author (Grant Allen) declared, "for the first time in my life wholly and solely to satisfy my own taste and my own conscience" — and this is the kind of teaching it offers. The author is speaking in his own name. "Blank pessimism," he says, "is the one creed possible for all save fools. To hold any other is to curl yourself up selfishly in your own easy chair, and say to your soul, 'O soul, eat and drink; O soul, make merry.' . . . Pessimism is sympathy; optimism is selfishness. . . . All honest art is therefore of necessity pessimistic." The close of the book describes the suicide of the heroine, and its last words are: "Her stainless soul ceased to exist forever."

In such an eclipse of hope — and there is more of that eclipse at this hour in human minds and hearts than one sometimes realizes — what can bring light to the world, but the glorious message of life and immortality through the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Look once more at heathenism. Here is an extract from a letter recently received from a young missionary working in India. "I have had to give up the idea," he says, "of sending home impressions of heathenism. Much of it is literally indescribable, and a good deal of it too awful to describe. It does not enter into one's mind all at once that one's environment in a place

like this is almost incredibly vile. Things have not so appalling an appearance on the surface, but here and there are breaks, and one gets a glimpse inside." Then follows a counter-picture of the changes seen in the "boys" at his institution. "Here is a very primitive Christianity, if you like; but for pluck, frank good nature, real affection, and honest, downright fidelity (according to their lights), they are as widely different from heathen boys as night from day."

It is this gospel which today is flooding with hope and courage myriads of hearts that would otherwise be in deepest despondency; that in India, in China, in Africa, in the New Hebrides, in every land to which it comes, is rising like a great "rose of dawn," a "dayspring from on high," fraught with hope and healing for the woes of men. But in this great work of the recovery of mankind to God, of the regeneration of the world, how absolutely indispensable is the Bible! Without it what could the missionary, arm and tongue paralyzed, accomplish? With it, even in the absence of the missionary, what wondrous changes, moral miracles even, are sometimes effected! Like seeds wafted by the wind into the crevices of hard rock, that grow and flourish and by-and-by split the rock, the simple truths of the Bible, without a human tongue to expound and enforce them, have often taken root, and brought forth amazing fruit, to God's sole glory. It was through a copy of the New Testament,

found floating in the waters of the Bay of Yeddo, that the gospel re-entered Japan, and created the first band of disciples — the nucleus of the future Church — when as yet no Christian teacher was permitted to enter, and the profession of Christianity was prohibited on pain of death.

The Results to Ourselves.

Need I, finally, in this plea for the power of the Bible, go further than its blessed results to ourselves? What do *we* not owe to the Bible, and to the gospel which it brings? I have spoken already of civil blessings; I look now only to the spiritual. Our innumerable churches, our Sabbath rest and privileges, the religion whose power inspires so much earnest life and so much noble work, the blessed effects of that religion in peace, in strength, in moral impulse in the minds that possess it, the comfort it dispenses in trial, and the joy and triumph it gives in death — all this is the fruit of the message of the Bible. Whatever blessings or hope we can trace to our Christian faith; whatever light it imparts to our minds, or cheer to our hearts; whatever power there is in it to sustain holiness or conquer sin — all this we owe to the fact that Jesus came, and lived, and died, and rose again, and has given us of His Spirit; and that we have the Bible in our hands to tell us that He did it, and what He expects us to be and do as His disciples.

Surveying the road we have traveled, am I

not entitled to claim that the rock of God's truth stands fast, and that Jesus, His gospel, and the Book that sets both forth, are still, let men gainsay as they will, the spiritual powers that hold in them the hope of the world's future. Christ's reign is not ending. It will endure. In many ways, voluntary or involuntary, His supremacy is owned by the very persons who most loudly dispute His claims. Even unbelief confirms the Scripture statement that God has given Jesus "the name which is above every name" (Phil. 2:9). Christ's own Church, with more consistency, echoes the confession. But so long as Christ, in His self-attesting power, commands the allegiance of believing hearts, the Bible, which contains the priceless treasure of God's Word regarding Him, will remain in undimmed honor. It will be read, prized and studied by devout minds, while the world lasts.

IV

The Supremacy of the Bible

FREDERICK W. FARRAR

MEN have misused Scripture just as they misuse light or food. And yet the Holy Scriptures continue to be — and even *increasingly* to be — the Supreme Bible of Humanity. There could be no more decisive proof of the unique transcendence of Holy Writ, and its essential message to mankind, than the fact that it has not only triumphed with ease over the assaults of its enemies, but has also continued to command the reverence, to guide the thoughts, to educate the souls, to kindle the moral aspirations of men through all the world. Were we to collect the impassioned eulogies which have been pronounced upon it by the saints and theologians of every age we should require a volume, and he must be indeed a cynic who could declare that testimonies so numerous and so fervent are due only to insincerity or custom. Yet, if such expressions of gratitude and even of ecstasy be suspected, how can we possibly explain the fact that the most advanced critics — that literary men outside the sphere of church influence — that

men who would be denounced as heretics — nay, even that avowed sceptics, who have approached the Bible without a single trammel of doctrine or tradition — have yet spoken of it in terms of astonishment and admiration no less glowing than those which have been used by preachers and divines?

I will collect a few of these estimates of Scripture formed by men of independent minds and of the highest ability, and by men who have approached the Bible solely from its literary and humanitarian side. Their evidence will show that the ignorant contempt with which the Bible is often disparaged only proves the incapacity of its assailants to grasp its real significance. It is a literature which no age or nation can equal or supersede, "though every library in the world had remained unravaged, and every teacher's truest words had been written down." "What problems do these books leave unexamined? what depths unfathomed? what height unscaled? what consolation unadministered? what conscience unreproved? what heart untouched?" How absurd it must be to scoff at a book which, through all the centuries, thousands of great men have reverenced in proportion to their greatness; a book for which, in age after age, warriors have fought, philosophers labored, and martyrs bled! The Lord Christ Himself did not disdain to quote from the Old Testament. Its literary splendor was acknowledged even by heathen critics like Longi-

nus, who referred to the sublimity of Genesis and the impassioned force of St. Paul. It exercised the toil of Origen and Jerome; it fired the eloquence of Gregory and Chrysostom; it molded the thoughts of Athanasius and Augustine; the "Summa Theologiæ" of St. Thomas Aquinas was but a meditation upon its theology, and the "Imitatio Christi" of St. Thomas à Kempis an attempt to express its spirituality. All that is best and greatest in the literature of two thousand years has been rooted in it and has sprung from it. It has inspired the career of all the best of men who "raised strong arms to bring heaven a little nearer to our earth." St. Vincent de Paul learned from its pages his tenderness for the poor; and John Howard his love for the suffering; and William Wilberforce his compassion for the slaves; and Lord Shaftesbury the dedication of his life to the amelioration of the lot of his fellow-men. Has there been one of our foremost statesmen or our best philanthropists who has not confessed the force of its inspiration? It dilated and inspired the immortal song of Dante and of Milton. All the brightest and best English verse, from the poems of Chaucer to the plays of Shakespeare in their noblest parts, are echoes of its lessons; and from Cowper to Wordsworth, from Coleridge to Tennyson, the greatest of our poets have drawn from its pages their loftiest wisdom. It inspired the pictures of Fra Angelico and Raphael, the music

of Handel and Mendelssohn. It kindled the intrepid genius of Luther, the bright imagination of Bunyan, the burning zeal of Whitefield. The hundred best books, the hundred best pictures, the hundred greatest strains of music are all in it and all derived from it. Augustine said long ago that in the great poets and philosophers of pagan antiquity he found many things that are noble and beautiful, but not among them all could he find "Come unto Me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

The First Group of Witnesses.

Vast indeed is the cloud of witnesses to the glory and supremacy of the Holy Scriptures. "Out of the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." I will begin with a pleiad of witnesses, chosen first by way of specimen from all sorts and conditions of men, yet unanimous in their testimony to the eternal preciousness of Holy Writ. I will adduce the opinions of a Romish cardinal, a Jewish litterateur, an American Unitarian, a German scholar, an Englishman of science, and an Englishman of letters. All of them differed, some of them disbelieved, yet they are all at one as to the unapproachable supremacy of the Holy Scriptures.

1. John Henry Newman was a Romish cardinal of sincere goodness and refined genius. He said of the Bible, "Its *light* is like the body of heaven in its clearness; its *vastness* like the

bosom of the sea; its *variety* like scenes of nature."

2. Heinrich Heine was a Jew, half German, half French; a man of flashing wit, a brilliant stylist, a confirmed doubter. After a Sunday of leaden ennui in Heligoland, he writes that he took up the Bible in desperation, and spent most of the day in reading it. Though he confesses himself a secret Hellene, he admits that he was not only well entertained but deeply edified. "What a book!" he exclaimed. "Vast and wide as the world! rooted in the abysses of creation, and towering up beyond the blue secrets of heaven! Sunrise and sunset, birth and death, promise and fulfillment, the whole drama of Humanity are all in this Book!"

"It is the Book of books. The Jews may easily console themselves for having lost Jerusalem, and the Temple, and the Ark of the Covenant, and the golden vessels, and the precious things of Solomon. Such a loss is insignificant compared with the Bible, the imperishable treasure which they have rescued. If I do not err, it was Mahomet who named the Jews 'the people of the Book' — a name which has remained theirs to the present day, and is deeply characteristic. A book is their fatherland. They live within the boundaries of this Book. Here do they exercise their inalienable rights of citizenship. Here they can be neither persecuted nor despised. Absorbed in the study of this Book,

they observed little of the changes which went on about them in the world. Nations arose and perished; states flourished and disappeared; revolutions stormed out of the ground, but they lay bent over their Book, and observed nothing of the wild tumult of the times that passed over thier heads."

Nor was this a mere passing spasm of admiration. When he was near his death, after years of agony on his mattress-coffin, when he had become a changed man, Heine wrote, "I attribute my enlightenment entirely and simply to the reading of a book. Of a book? Yes! and it is an old homely book, modest as nature — a book which has a look modest as the sun which warms us, as the bread which nourishes us — a book as full of love and blessing as the old mother who reads in it with her dear trembling lips, and this book is *the* Book, the Bible. With right is it named the Holy Scriptures. He who has lost his God can find Him again in this Book, and he who has never known Him is here struck by the breath of the Divine Word."

3. Theodore Parker was a Unitarian minister at Boston, a man of deep earnestness, of great eloquence, of splendid courage.

"This collection of books has taken such a hold on the world as no other. The literature of Greece, which goes up like incense from that land of temples and heroic deeds, has not half the influence of this Book, from a nation alike

despised in ancient and modern times. It is read of a Sunday in all the ten thousand pulpits of our land; in all the temples of Christendom is its voice lifted up week by week. The sun never sets on its gleaming page. It goes equally to the cottage of the plain man and the palace of the king. It is woven into the literature of the scholar, and colors the talk of the street. The bark of the merchant cannot sail the sea without it; no ship of war goes to the conflict but the Bible is there. It enters men's closets, mingles in all the grief and cheerfulness of life. The affianced maiden prays God in Scripture for strength in her new duties. Men are married by Scripture; the Bible attends them in their sickness, when the fever of the world is on them; the aching head finds a softer pillow when the Bible lies underneath; the mariner, escaping from shipwreck, clutches this first of his treasures, and keeps it sacred to God."

4. Heinrich von Ewald was a German scholar of immense learning, who by indefatigable, life-long study — amid the universal chorus of anathemas from that "blind and naked Ignorance" which

> Delivers brawling judgments unashamed
> On all things all day long —

flung more light on the true meaning and history of Scripture than all his assailants put together. One day, when the late Dean Stanley was visiting him, a New Testament which was lying on a

little table happened to fall to the ground. He stooped to pick it up, and he laid it again on the table. "It is impossible," says Dean Stanley, "to forget the noble enthusiasm with which this 'dangerous heretic,' as he was regarded, grasped the small volume, and exclaimed with indescribable emotion, 'In this little book is contained all the best wisdom of the world.'"

5. Professor Huxley was a man of science, and one of the most eminent. It was he who invented the word "Agnosticism," and he accepted the name "Agnostic." Yet he pleaded in the school board for the Bible, as the best source of the highest education for children, and in the *Contemporary Review* for December, 1870, he wrote: "I have always been strongly in favor of secular education, in the sense of education without theology, but I must confess I have been no less seriously perplexed to know by what practical measures the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, was to be kept up in the present utterly chaotic state of opinion on these matters without the use of the Bible. The pagan moralists lack life and color, and even the noble Stoic, Marcus Antoninus, is too high and refined for an ordinary child. Take the Bible as a whole, make the severest deductions which fair criticism can dictate for shortcomings and positive errors, eliminate, as a sensible lay teacher would do if left to himself, all that it is not desirable for children to occupy themselves with,

and there still remains in this old literature a vast residuum of moral beauty and grandeur. And then consider the great historical fact that for three centuries this Book has been woven into the life of all that is best and noblest in English history; that it has become the national epic of Britain, and is familiar to noble and simple from John o'Groat's House to Land's End, as Dante and Tasso were once to the Italians; that it is written in the noblest and purest English, and abounds in exquisite beauties of a merely literary form; and, finally, that it forbids the veriest hind who never left his village to be ignorant of the existence of other countries and other civilizations, and of a great past, stretching back to the furthest limits of the oldest nations in the world. By the study of what other book could children be so much humanized, and made to feel that each figure in that vast historical procession fills, like themselves, but a momentary space in the interval between two eternities, and earns the blessings or the curses of all times, according to its efforts to do good and hate evil, even as they also are earning their payment for their work?"

6. Mr. Matthew Arnold was a man with an exquisite gift of style and of critical insight. He retained but little faith in the miraculous; his creed was anything but orthodox. Yet the Bible was his chief and constant study, and he even contributed a most important element to

the true principles of its elucidation when he insisted that being a literature it must be interpreted on the fixed principles of literary criticism. His writings abound in passages which witness to his intense reverence and admiration for the Sacred Books.

"As well imagine a man," he says, "with a sense for sculpture not cultivating it by the help of the remains of Greek art, and a man with a sense for poetry not cultivating it by the help of Homer and Shakespeare, as a man with a sense for conduct not cultivating it by the help of the Bible."

The Testimony of Great Authors.

I will now proceed to group together a few more of the remarkable testimonies to the unique supremacy of Scripture over all other literature — testimonies gathered from men of every variety of genius and eminence, and from men who, though they differed from each other as widely as possible in their religious standpoint, were at one in their exaltation of Holy Writ.

Let us begin with great authors.

1. Richard Hooker:

"There is scarcely any noble part of knowledge worthy of the mind of man, but from Scripture it may have some direction and light."

2. Milton:

"There are no songs to be compared with the songs of Zion, no orations equal to those of the

Prophets, and no politics equal to those the Scriptures can teach us."

And of the Scriptures in general he says:

"I shall wish I may deserve to be reckoned among those who admire and dwell upon them."

3. Spenser, we are told, studied the prophetic writings before he wrote the "Faerie Queene."

4. Bacon has more than seventy allusions to the Bible in twenty-four of his essays.

5. George Herbert wrote:

'T is heaven in perspective, and the bliss
Of glory here,
If anywhere,
By saints on earth anticipated is,
Whilst faith to every word
Its being doth afford.[1]

6. Sir Isaac Newton:

"We account the Scriptures of God to be the most sublime philosophy."

7. Addison, Johnson, Pope, Young abound in Scriptural allusions, and that in their most beautiful and impressive passages.

8. William Cowper, comparing the poor Buckinghamshire lace-worker with Voltaire, says:

Yon cottager who weaves at her own door,
Pillow and bobbins all her little store,
Just earns a scanty pittance, and at night
Lies down secure, her heart and pocket light;
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew;
And in that treasure reads with sparkling eyes
Her title to a mansion in the skies.

[1] The Synagogue, p. 14.

O happy peasant! O unhappy bard!
His the mere tinsel, hers the rich reward!
He, praised perhaps for ages yet to come;
She, never heard of half a mile from home:
He lost in errors his vain heart prefers,
She safe in the simplicity of hers.[1]

9. The poet Collins in the latter part of his life withdrew from his general studies, and traveled with no other book than an English New Testament, such as children carry to school. Dr. Johnson was anxious to know what companion a man of letters had chosen; the poet said, "I have only one book, but that book is the best."

10. John Wesley:

"I am a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I am a spirit, coming from God, and returning to God; just hovering over the great gulf; a few moments hence I am no more seen; I drop into an unchangeable eternity! I want to know one thing — the way to heaven: how to land safe on that happy shore. God himself has condescended to teach the way. He hath written it down in a book. O give me that Book! At any price, give me the Book of God! I have it: here is knowledge enough for me. Let me be a man of one book. Here, then, I am, far from the busy ways of men. I sit down alone; only God is here. In His presence I open, I read His Book, for this end — to find the way to heaven."

[1] Truth.

11. Coleridge:

"For more than a thousand years the Bible collectively taken has gone hand in hand with civilization, science, law — in short, with the moral and intellectual cultivation of the species, always supporting and often leading the way." [1]

12. Sir Walter Scott:

> Within this awful volume lies
> The mystery of mysteries:
> Happiest he of human race
> To whom God has given grace
> To read, to fear, to hope, to pray,
> To lift the latch, and learn the way;
> And better had he ne'er been born
> Who reads to doubt, or reads to scorn.[2]

"Bring me the book," he said, when he lay dying. "What book?" asked Lockhart, his son-in-law. "The Book," said Sir Walter; "the Bible; there is but one."

13. Lord Macaulay, who knew the Bible well from a child and often refers to it, said:

"The English Bible — a book which, if everything else in our language should perish, would alone suffice to show the whole extent of its beauty and power." [3]

14. Charles Dickens wrote to his son:

"It is my comfort and my sincere conviction that you are going to try the life for which you are best fitted. I think its freedom and wildness

[1] Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit, p. 69.
[2] The Monastery.
[3] Essay on Dryden.

more suited to you than experiment in a study or office would have been. Try to do to others as you would have them do to you, and do not be discouraged if they fail sometimes. It is much better for you that they should fail in obeying the greatest rule laid down by our Saviour than that you should. I put a New Testament among your books for the very same reasons and with the very same hopes that made me write an easy account of it for you when you were a little child — because it is the best book that ever was or will be known in the world, and because it teaches you the best lessons by which any human creature who tries to be truthful and faithful to duty can possibly be guided." [1]

15. Thomas Carlyle.

Carlyle was a man who prided himself on his absolute veracity. His attitude toward the Church, his attitude to every form of Christianity, was one of intellectual aloofness and complete independence. He says of the Bible that it is

"The one Book wherein, for thousands of years, the spirit of man has found light and nourishment, and a response to whatever was deepest in his heart."

John Ruskin's Notable Words.

16. John Ruskin:

"All that I have taught of Art," he says, "everything that I have written, whatever great-

[1] Forster's Life of Dickens, III. 445.

ness there has been in any thought of mine, whatever I have done in my life, has simply been due to the fact that, when I was a child, my mother daily read with me a part of the Bible, and daily made me learn a part of it by heart."

"How much I owe," he says, in the first volume of his "Præterita," "to my mother for having so exercised me in the Scriptures as to make me grasp them in what my correspondent would call their 'concrete whole'; and above all taught me to reverence them as transcending all thought and ordaining all conduct. This she effected, not by her own sayings or personal authority, but simply by compelling me to read the Book thoroughly for myself. As soon as I was able to read with fluency, she began a course of Bible work with me, which never ceased till I went to Oxford. She read alternate verses to me, watching at first every intonation of my voice, and correcting the false ones, till she made me understand the verse, if within my reach, rightly and energetically. It might be beyond me altogether; that she did not care about; but she made sure that as soon as I got hold of it at all, I should get hold of it by the right end. In this way she began with the first verse of Genesis, and went straight through to the last verse of the Apocalypse; hard names, numbers, Levitical law and all; and began again at Genesis next day. If a name was hard, the better the exercise

in pronunciation; if a chapter was tiresome, the better the lesson in patience; if loathsome, the better the lesson in faith that there was some use in its being so outspoken. After our chapters (from two to three a day, according to their length, the first thing after breakfast, and no interruption from servants allowed, none from visitors, who either joined in the reading or had to stay upstairs, and none from any visitings or excursions, except real traveling), I had to learn a few verses by heart, or repeat, to make sure I had not lost, something of what was already known; and, with the chapters above enumerated, I had to learn the whole body of the fine old Scottish paraphrases, which are good, melodious, and forceful verse; and to which, together with the Bible itself, I owe the first cultivation of my ear in sound. It is strange that of all the pieces of the Bible that my mother thus taught me, that which cost me most to learn, and which was, to my child's mind, chiefly repulsive — Psalm 119 — has now become of all the most precious to me in its overflowing and glorious passion of love for the law of God."

17. The two greatest poets of our generation, Browning and Tennyson, abound in loving and reverent allusions to the Bible, which will recur to the memory of every student of their works.

18. Mr. J. A. Froude, in his sketch of John Bunyan, writes:

"The Bible thoroughly known is a literature

of itself — the rarest and the richest in all departments of thought or imagination which exists."

19. Charles Reade writes that he was astonished at the amazing vividness of impression produced by the sacred writers with a few slight touches. He considered that in a few lines they left a deeper mark than many a writer of genius in a long work of fiction. This consideration sufficed, even alone, to impress on him a sense of their transcendent value.

20. Speaking of the matchless verve and insight which we find in the delineation of characters in the Bible, another of our most eminent modern novelists, Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson, says:

"Written in the East, these characters live for ever in the West; written in one province, they pervade the world; penned in rude times, they are prized more and more as civilization advances; product of antiquity, they come home to the business and bosoms of men, women, and children in modern days. Then is it any exaggeration to say that the 'characters of Scripture are a marvel of the mind'?"

21. Another eminent novelist, Mr. Hall Caine, writes in *McClure's Magazine:*

"I think that I know my Bible as few literary men know it. There is no book in the world like it, and the finest novels ever written fall far short in interest of any one of the stories it tells.

Whatever strong situations I have in my books are not of my creation, but are taken from the Bible. 'The Deemster' is the story of the Prodigal Son. 'The Bondman' is the story of Esau and Jacob. 'The Scapegoat' is the story of Eli and his sons, but with Samuel as a little girl; and 'The Manxman' is the story of David and Uriah."

22. Mr. J. H. Green wrote his admirable history of England without the smallest touch of clerical bias, and, speaking simply as an observer and an impartial historian, he records the memorably noble effects produced upon England by the possession of the Scriptures in a language which the people could understand.

"England became the people of a Book, and that Book was the Bible. It was, as yet, the one English book which was familiar to every Englishman. It was read in churches, and it was read at home, and everywhere its words, as they fell on ears which custom had not deadened to their force and beauty, kindled a startling enthusiasm. . . . Elizabeth might silence or tune the pulpits, but it was impossible for her to silence or tune the great preachers of justice, and mercy, and truth, who spoke from the Book which the Lord again opened to the people. . . . The effect of the Bible in this way was simply amazing. The whole temper of the nation was changed. A new conception of life and of man superseded the old. A new moral and religious

impulse spread through every class. . . . Theology rules there, said Grotius of England, only ten years after Elizabeth's death. The whole nation, in fact, becomes a Church."

The Testimony of Rulers and Statesmen.

Let us now adduce the opinions of a few rulers and statesmen.

1. King Edward the Sixth. At the coronation of the young King Edward VI., three swords were brought to be carried before him, as signs of his being head of three kingdoms. "There is one sword yet lacking," said the king, "the Bible. That book is the sword of the Spirit, and to be preferred before any other. Without that sword we can do nothing, we have no power." And, so it is said, at his command the Bible was also carried before him in the procession.

2. Very remarkable was the emphatic testimony of Napoleon I. to the Bible as recorded in Bertrand's Memoirs. "Behold it upon this table" (here he solemnly placed his hand upon it). "I never omit to read it, and every day with the same pleasure. Nowhere is to be found such a series of beautiful ideas, admirable moral maxims, which produce in one's soul the same emotion which one experiences in contemplating the infinite expanse of the skies resplendent upon a summer's night with all the brilliance of the stars. Not only is one's mind absorbed, it is con-

trolled, and the soul can never go astray with this book for its guide."[1]

3. Lord Bacon — "The Student's Prayer":

"To God the Father, God the Word, God the Spirit we pour forth most humble and hearty supplications that He, remembering the calamities of mankind, and the pilgrimage of this our life, in which we wear out days few and evil, would please to open to us new refreshments out of the fountain of His goodness for the alleviating of our miseries. This also we humbly and earnestly beg, that human things may not prejudice such as are Divine; neither that from the unlocking of the gates of sense and the kindling of a greater natural light anything of incredulity or intellectual night may arise in our minds toward Divine mysteries; but rather that by our minds thoroughly cleansed and purged from fancy and vanities, and subject and perfectly given up to the Divine oracles, there may be given unto faith such things as are faith's."

4. John Selden: "I have surveyed most of the learning found among the sons of men; but I can stay my soul on none of them but the Bible."

5. Sir Matthew Hale (Lord Chief Justice): "Every morning read seriously and reverently a portion of the Holy Scripture, and acquaint yourself with the doctrine thereof. It is a book full of light and wisdom, and will make you wise to eternal life."

[1] See Table Talk of Napoleon I., p. 120.

6. Judge Blackstone, in his famous "Commentaries on the Laws of England," says that the Bible has always been regarded as part of the Common Law of England."

7. Edmund Burke: "The Bible is not a book, but a literature, and indeed an infinite collection of the most varied and the most venerable literature."

8. William Wilberforce: "Through all my perplexities and distresses, I seldom read any other book, and I as rarely have felt the want of any other. It has been my hourly study."

9. Mr. Gladstone: "It is supremacy, not precedence, that we ask for the Bible; it is contrast as well as resemblance, that we must feel compelled to insist on. The Bible is stamped with speciality of origin, and an immeasurable distance separates it from all competitors.

"Who doubts that, times without number, particular portions of Scripture find their way to the human soul as if they were embassies from on high, each with its own commission of comfort, of guidance, or of warning? What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed or can fail to draw from this inexhaustible treasure-house its proper supply? What profession, what position, is not daily and hourly enriched by these words which repetition never weakens, which carry with them now, as in the days of their first utterance, the freshness of youth and immortality? When the solitary stu-

dent opens all his heart to drink them in, they will reward his toil. And in forms yet more hidden and withdrawn, in the retirement of the chamber, in the stillness of the night season, upon the bed of sickness, and in the face of death, the Bible will be there, its several words how often winged with their several and special messages to heal and to soothe, to uplift and uphold, to invigorate and stir. Nay, more, perhaps, than this: amid the crowds of the court, or the forum, or the street, or the market-place, where every thought of every soul seems to be set upon the excitements of ambition, or of business, or of pleasure, there too, even there, the still small voice of the Holy Bible will be heard, and the soul, aided by some blessed word, may find wings like a dove, may flee away and be at rest."

The Testimony of American Statesmen and Writers.

Of American statesmen and writers we may adduce:

1. President John Quincy Adams:

"The first and almost the only book deserving of universal attention is the Bible. The Bible is the Book of all others to be read at all ages and in all conditions of human life; not to be read once or twice through and then laid aside, but to be read in small portions of one or two chapters every day, and never to be intermitted except

by some overruling necessity. I speak as a man of the world to men of the world, and I say to you, 'Search the Scriptures.'

"I have for many years made it a practice to read through the Bible once a year. . . . It is an invaluable and inexhaustible mine of knowledge and virtue."

2. Andrew Jackson, President of the United States. When he lay on his deathbed he pointed to the Family Bible which lay on the table beside him, and said to his physician:

"That Book, sir, is the rock on which our Republic rests."

3. Senator W. B. Leigh, a famous Virginian lawyer:

"I advise every man to read his Bible. I speak of it here as a book which it behooves a lawyer to make himself thoroughly acquainted with. It is the code of ethics of every Christian country on the globe, and tends, above all other books, to elucidate the spirit of law throughout the Christian world. It is, in fact, a part of the practical law of every Christian nation, whether recognized as such or not."

4. Daniel Webster, the great American orator:

"From the time that, at my mother's feet or on my father's knee, I first learned to lisp verses from the sacred writings, they have been my daily study and vigilant contemplation. If there be anything in my style or thoughts to be commended, the credit is due to my kind parents in

instilling into my mind an early love of the Scriptures."

And, again,

"If we abide by the principles taught in the Bible, our country will go on prospering and to prosper; but if we and our posterity neglect its instructions and authority, no man can tell how sudden a catastrophe may overwhelm us and bury our glory in profound obscurity."

And in his speech on the completion of the Bunker Hill Monument (1843), he said: "The Bible is a book of faith, and a book of doctrine, and a book of morals, and a book of religion, of especial revelation from God."

When he lay on his deathbed his physician quoted to him the verse of Psalm 23 — "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." And the great strong man faltered out, "Yes; that is what I want. Thy rod, Thy rod; Thy staff, Thy staff." They were the last words he spoke.

5. Secretary Seward: "The whole life of human progress is suspended on the ever-growing influence of the Bible."

6. General Grant, President of the United States, sent a message to this effect to the Sunday-school children of America in 1876: "Hold fast to the Bible as the sheet anchor to your liberties. Write its precepts in your heart and practise them

in your lives. To the influence of this Book we are indebted for all the progress made in true civilization, and to this we must look as our guide in the future."

7. William Lloyd Garrison, who did more than any man to sweep away the curse of American slavery, said, "Take away the Bible from us, and our warfare against intemperance and impurity and oppression and infidelity and crime is at an end. We have no authority to speak, no courage to act."

8. "Of all books," said Mr. Dana to the students of Union College, "of all books, the most indispensable and the most useful, the one whose knowledge is most effective, is the Bible. There is no book from which more valuable lessons can be learned. I am considering it now not as a religious book, but as a manual of utility, of professional preparation and professional use for a journalist. There is, perhaps, no book whose style is more suggestive and more instructive, from which you learn more directly that sublime simplicity which never exaggerates, which recounts the greatest event with solemnity, of course, but without sentimentality or affectation, none which you open with such confidence and lay down with such reverence. There is no Book like the Bible."

9. Mr. Charles Dudley Warner wrote in *Harper's Magazine:*

"Wholly apart from its religious or from its

ethical value, the Bible is the one Book that no intelligent person who wishes to come into contact with the world of thought and to share the ideas of the great minds of the Christian era can afford to be ignorant of. All modern literature and all art are permeated with it. There is scarcely a great work in the language that can be fully understood and enjoyed without this knowledge, so full is it of allusions and illustrations from the Bible. This is true of fiction, of poetry, of economic and philosophic works, and also of the scientific and even agnostic treatises. It is not at all a question of religion, or theology, or of dogma; it is a question of general intelligence. A boy or girl at college in the presence of the works set for either to master without a fair knowledge of the Bible is an ignoramus, and is disadvantaged accordingly. It is in itself almost a liberal education, as many great masters in literature have testified. It has so entered into law, literature, thought, the whole modern life of the Christian world, that ignorance of it is a most serious disadvantage to the student."

10. We should perhaps hardly have expected a glowing eulogy of the Bible from Mr. Walt Whitman. Yet in his "November Boughs" he wrote:

"The Bible as Poetry. I've said nothing yet of the cumulus of associations of the Bible as a poetic entity, and of every portion of it. Not the old edifice only — the congeries also of events

and struggles and surroundings, of which it has been the scene and motive — even the horrors, dreads, deaths. How many ages and generations have brooded and wept and agonized over this Book! What untellable joys and ecstasies, what support to martyrs at the stake, from it! To what myriads has it been the shore and rock of safety — the refuge from driving tempest and wreck! Translated in all languages, how it has united this diverse world! Of civilized lands today, whose of our retrospects has it not interwoven and linked and permeated? Not only does it bring us what is clasped within its covers: nay, that is the least of what it brings. Of its thousands there is not a verse, not a word, but is thick-studded with human emotion. Successions of fathers and sons, mothers and daughters, of our own antecedents, inseparable from that background of us, on which, phantasmal as it is, all that we are today inevitably depends — our ancestry, our past."

11. Let me add the testimony of one of the best known of the great philanthropists of America.

It is related of George Peabody that when he was an old man, sitting in his office in London one day, a boy brought him a New Testament for some purpose, I know not what; but the old man, looking up, said: "My boy, you carry that book easily in your youth, but when you are as old as I am, it must carry you."

V

The Abiding Value of the Old Testament

GEORGE L. ROBINSON[1]

Ever since Marcion and the Gnostics emphasized the antithesis between the God of the Old Testament and the God of the New, extreme views have prevailed among men as to whether the Old Testament is really an essential part of Christianity. Some are disposed to cut the New Testament aloof from the Hebrew Scriptures altogether, because, as they claim, Christianity can live on quite as well without them. Others regard the Old Testament as "the millstone about the neck of Christianity," a stumbling-block to Christians as much as the Cross is to the Jews. While others, who are not so explicitly antagonistic in their attitude, have no adequate appreciation of the preciousness of the treasure which has come down to them from remote antiquity. The same men, it should be noted, are usually lacking also in their appreciation of the New Testament. For, as Dr. George Adam Smith observes, "It is one of not the least

[1] This chapter is taken from the book of the same name, published by Association Press: New York.

faults of a merely academic criticism, that it never appeals to Christian standards except when it would disparage the men of the Old Covenant." [1]

Our estimate of the worth of the Old Testament will depend largely upon our attitude to the Hebrews as the recipients and custodians of God's revelation to men. Their history is "like a piece of shot silk; hold it at one angle and you see dark purple, hold it at another and you see bright golden tints." Too often the Old Testament is studied with purely æsthetic motives. Frequently it is approached from the strictly scientific point of view. But neither — nor both — of these methods is adequate to unlock its wealth. The Old Testament will not yield itself to mere æsthetic or scientific investigation. The Old Testament, above all other books, has spiritual and religious value as the record of God's revelation to the world. The roots of Christian teaching go deep down into Hebrew soil, and to understand the whole tree one must study the roots. The institutions of the Hebrews are types of Christian truth. Christianity, as well as the Bible, has its Old Testament half. The Old Testament is an integral part of the Word of God, a source of inspiration, and a guide to ethical life. The problem of our day is to rediscover its value and to portray it to men.

[1] Jerusalem, II. 343.

The Old Testament Has Intrinsic Value of its Own.

That the Old Testament has *historical* value is obvious to every student of antiquity. It is the Ariadne's thread to the archæologist. (Cf. Genesis 10 and 14.) It is likewise the fountain head of what is known as "the philosophy of history." The Hebrews were the first to take a teleological view of the world, the first to interpret human events in terms of God's providence. Other histories displayed the disciplinary love of God, but it was left for the Hebrews to discern that love and to describe it in terms of God's love. To them it was not enough to study mere events, they sought the underlying principles and showed the nexus of cause and effect. Ottley, in eulogizing this quality in Hebrew historians, goes so far as to define their inspiration as "the ability to see God's hand in human events."

The *literary* excellence, too, of the Old Testament is widely recognized. The charm of its simplicity, the variety of its imagery, the grace of its diction, the melody of its rhythm, and the richness of its vocabulary and thought, are conspicuous features of the whole Old Testament — of its history, biography, oratory, prophecy, and poetry alike. Even our own English vocabulary has been enriched by words taken over from the Hebrew, such as Messiah, Sabbath, manna, Nazarite, seraph, cherub, shekel, satan, shibboleth,

and many others. Almost countless expressions and phrases of our every-day speech come directly from the Old Testament: for example, "See eye to eye," "Let us eat and drink; for tomorrow we die," "Precept upon precept, line upon line," "The shadow of a great rock in a weary land," "Without money and without price," "Peace like a river," "Everlasting life," etc., etc.

As a monograph on *comparative religion,* also, the Old Testament is unique. Scant indeed would be the sources handed down from antiquity were the Old Testament of the Hebrews lost. This is true not alone because of its quality but also because of its character and genius. Above all the other religions of antiquity, that of the Hebrews is conspicuous for *originality.* The Hebrews seem to have had a special talent for truth that was theistic and for verities that were eternal. Through their fertility of conception, which bears the unmistakable marks of inspiration, they discovered some truths once for all, truths which have ever since been regarded as essential factors in all true religion. Primary among these is their conception of *God.* The Jewish doctrine of God is absolutely unique. To the Hebrew mind, Jehovah is not only a majestic sovereign, strong and terrible, but He is personal, holy, merciful, righteous, and good: a Father, also, who pitieth His children, and who, though transcendent, condescends to hold com-

munion and fellowship with the humblest of His saints. The Old Testament never attempts to prove the existence of God; it assumes this as axiomatic. It is "the fool" who says in his heart, "There is no God" (Ps. 14:1).

The Hebrews also discovered *conscience.* In due time they even produced an order of men who became a conscience for the nation. Modern prophets too frequently shrink from being a conscience unto their people. In order to express Israel's moral sense of obligation to God, Moses formulated a comprehensive code of civil and religious law, which lifted them above the plane of their heathen contemporaries. Their neighbors were content to worship Nature; the Hebrews, on the contrary, early discovered that the law which declares the *will* of God is better than nature or "the heavens" which tell of His *glory:* "The heavens declare the glory of God . . . but the law of Jehovah (in contrast) is perfect" (Ps. 19:1, 7). They also taught men to pray, giving expression to their desires through sacrifices, which was the antique manner of obtaining the divine favor. Isaac, for example, entreated Jehovah for his wife, literally, "offered sweet smelling fragrance"; for the word in the original, *atar,* which is translated "entreated," is akin to that in our English expression "attar of roses" (Gen. 25:21).

The Hebrews also cultivated *faith,* as the essential element in religion. And they emphasized

duty, in particular the primary obligations of honesty, righteousness, obedience, and charity. They even enunciated for the first time what might be called the germ of "Christian Endeavor," as, for example, when Malachi commends the priests who "turned many away from iniquity" (Mal. 2:6), or when the Hebrew sage declares that "he that watereth shall be watered also himself" (Prov. 11:25).

The Hebrews were the first also of the nations to teach the sacred character of *patriotism:* for example, Zebulun and Naphtali are praised in the Song of Deborah for having jeoparded their lives unto the death upon the high places of the field (Judg. 5:18). Immortality likewise (Pss. 16 and 17) and redemption (Isa. 63:8), forgiveness of sin (Ps. 32) and victory over death (Isa. 26:19, Dan. 12:2), are all carefully unfolded, with greater or lesser fullness, in the Old Testament — not so fully, however, as to preclude the necessity of the incarnation. It was left to Christ to bring life and immortality to light; He it was who filled with richer, deeper ethical content the rudimentary forms which the Hebrews were as yet unable to appreciate. For we must ever remember that while God sent the nations to common school and Israel to high school, so to speak, He sent the disciples to college at the feet of Christ. Thus He revealed Himself "by divers portions."

Truth Taught in Characters.

Most remarkable also is the fact that in the Old Testament the great truths of religion are presented not in abstract form but *concretely*, and indeed so attractively that the reader is charmed by their simplicity and beauty, and by the freshness of Hebrew life and faith. Take, for instance, some of the great characters of Old Testament history. In the story of Noah, what a parable is there of encouragement to those who are misunderstood, misinterpreted, and scoffed at; in the career of Abraham, what an instructive illustration of the summons which must come to us all to go out into the great unknown country of the other life; in the ambitious, unscrupulous character of Jacob, what a likeness to the spiritual biography of many a man; in the story of Joseph, what a parable of the way to bear adversity; in that of Gideon, what a summons to faithful endeavor with assurance of victory; in Samson, what a lesson of the way in which the noblest opportunities of birth and power may be prostituted; in Samuel, what a splendid type both of a normal religious childhood and of a normal religious life; in Isaiah, what a stately example of one who recognized that public affairs demand the devoted service of the holiest and most consecrated men; in Jeremiah, what a model of personal, individual moral responsibility; while in Job, tried in the furnace of affliction, what imperishable evidence that the present life is all too short for

the realization of a divine theodicy of perfect justice, and of the inevitability of a life beyond.

Alleged Infelicities and Blemishes.

In comparison with such great masterpieces of religious art — such living, throbbing characters — how unimportant and insignificant are the alleged infelicities and blemishes in the Old Testament to which men sometimes superficially point the finger of disapproval: for example, polygamy, divorce, slavery, revenge, ritual, the vindictiveness of the psalmists, and judgment; the extent and character of which have been so greatly exaggerated by the enemies of the Old Testament. And, once more, granted that the Old Testament frequently tells of judgment, and paints solemn pictures of universal doom upon those who disobey the commands of Jehovah-God, the New Testament is far more explicit in the emphasis it places on eternal doom. It is indeed Jesus Himself who describes the doom of hell as a place of outer darkness and of weeping and gnashing of teeth (Matt. 25). It was His loving lips that shaped this form of words, so heart-touching in its wailing but so decisive in its proclamation of blackness, homelessness, and sorrow. In the words of the late Dr. Alexander Maclaren, that "prince of preachers" and king of expositors, "the religion of Jesus Christ was no mere soft and pliant sympathetic helpfulness; it could smite and stab and

be severe, and knit its brow, and speak stern words, as all true service must. For it is not service but cruelty to sympathize with the sinner and say nothing in condemnation of his sin." [1] There are, of necessity, two sides to moral religion, one stern, the other tender. The law, it is true, speaks in stern imperatives; but the gospel is as rigid in its requirements as the law; in fact, its demands and penalties are in several instances even more severe than those of the law.

The Old Testament is the Interpreter of the New.

We frequently hear men say that the New Testament is the key to the Old, but it is equally true that the Old Testament is the interpreter of the New. The New Testament is conceived in the womb of Hebrew thought. Pedagogically as well as apologetically the Old Testament is an indispensable part of Christianity. "No scripture is of private interpretation."

Few men adequately appreciate what the Old Testament has meant to Christianity. The Old Testament canon has had a history in the Christian Church as well as in the Jewish. It has wrought itself into the very warp and woof of Christianity. This was possible because the essence of the Old Testament is love. Even the

[1] Expositions of Holy Scripture; on Matt. 20: 28, p. 76.

Decalogue is introduced by a preface which implicitly states that it was because Jehovah loved Israel that He gave them a code of laws: "I am Jehovah thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage," therefore, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:2, 3). Men are wont to say that the Old Testament reveals a God of justice, whereas the New Testament, a God of love. Such a statement is much narrower than the facts. The God of the Old Testament is also the God of the New, and His name is Love: to this the Psalms, Deuteronomy, and especially the prophecies of Hosea bear witness. The Old Testament, indeed, describes God as dwelling in a temple, the New Testament as tabernacling in the heart. Ancient temples had no windows, Deity dwelt in thick darkness (1 Kings 8:12); in the New Testament also God dwells in mystery, but it is the mystery of light. According to the Old Testament, God breathed into man the breath of life (Gen. 2:7); according to Paul, "In him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:28). The Old Testament gives prominence to the solidarity of the nation; the New Testament to the value of the individual. The messages of the prophets are emphatically social, those of Christ individual and evangelistic. The popular national note of the Old Testament has been repeatedly echoed and re-echoed throughout the history of the Christian Church. "The Apostolic

church worked officially upon the democratic precedents set her throughout the law and history of the Old Covenant."[1] Martial psalms, like the 68th, have been sung on the plains of the Palatinate, from the lips of Cromwell's Ironsides, and in Scotland's struggle for crown and covenant.

The *ideals* of the two Covenants are practically the same: that of the Old Testament is holiness: "Ye shall be holy; for I, Jehovah, your God, am holy" (Lev. 19:2); that of Jesus, perfection, "Ye, therefore, shall be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect" (Matt. 5:48). There is doubtless a slight difference in the ethical contents of these conceptions, but in essence they are the same — likeness to God. The reason for the difference is patent to any one who will pause to reflect: the Old Testament covers millenniums of ethical and religious development, the New Testament less than a century.

As Dr. George Adam Smith observes: "The Old Testament lies not under but behind the New. It is not the quarry of the excavator or archæologist. It is the Hinterland of the New; part of the same continent of truth, without whose ampler areas and wider watersheds the rivers, which grew to their fullness in the new dispensation, could never have gained one tenth of their volume or their influence." Or, as Augustine has suggested:

[1] G. A. Smith, Jerusalem, I., p. 455.

The New is in the Old *con*tained,
The Old is in the New *re*tained;
The New is in the Old *con*cealed,
The Old is in the New *re*vealed;
The New is in the Old *en*folded,
The Old is in the New *un*folded.

Or, as Professor Sanday puts it, "The New Testament is latent in the Old, the Old Testament is patent in the New." Accordingly, in our study of the Old Testament, we should never lose sight of its goal in the New; and in our study of the New Testament, we should never lose sight of its origin in the Old.

The Old Quoted in the New.

The actual necessity of studying the New Testament in the light of the Old becomes more obvious when we recall that there are not fewer than five hundred direct *quotations* from the Old Testament in the New. New Testament saints found it possible to adopt Old Testament utterances as their own. Religious fervor speaks the same language. Not only the "Benedictus" of Zacharias (Luke 1:68–79), which is so steeped in Old Testament language that some one has called it "an anthology from the Psalms and Prophets," but the Beatitudes also, the conclusion to the Lord's Prayer, the Hosannas of the multitude on the occasion of our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and even the Master's gracious invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you

rest," are full of Old Testament reminiscences and richly colored with Old Testament thought and phraseology. Likewise some of the most precious phrases in the New Testament, such as "the living God," "the great Shepherd of the sheep," and "the blood of the everlasting covenant," are but echoes of the language of the Old Testament. And what is incidentally very remarkable, the most frequently quoted psalm of the collection, after the 23d, is a psalm of imprecation, the 69th. But no doctrine or teaching of Judaism is taken over into Christianity without, of course, being transfigured in the process.

But still more binding of the two covenants in one are the *Messianic hopes* of the Old Testament, which have found their fulfillment in the New, and which prepared the Hebrew mind for the coming of the Christ. Without exception the Hebrew prophets were optimists. To one and all of them Israel's golden age lay in the future, not, as with so many other nations, in the past. Many of them predicted definitely the advent of One who would bring spiritual salvation to Israel. Jeremiah even predicted that a new Covenant would some day supersede the Old (Jer. 31 : 31–34). Obviously, therefore, the Old Testament is the interpreter of the New, and will continue to be so long as Jesus Christ is regarded as the fulfillment of Messianic hope. And accordingly, "it is necessary," as Professor Sanday observes, "to go back to the old Hebraic foun-

dations of our religion and lay them again more deeply and firmly, or rather see how they have been laid by the Great Architect, who is so much wiser and mightier than we."

Paul was not only a friend of the law and thoroughly conversant with the law himself, he presupposed a remarkable acquaintance with the Old Testament among the members of his churches. Timothy especially he commends because " from a babe " he had known the sacred writings " which are able to make one wise unto salvation through faith which is in Jesus Christ." And the same sacred writings he most cordially recommended to his readers when he said: " Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work "(II Tim. 3: 15–17).

The Epistle to the Hebrews is even more minute in its comparison of the Old and New Covenants. Yet in it also God's revelation is declared to be continuous.

Christ's Attitude to the Old Testament.

But the final test of the abiding value of the Old Testament must be the revelation of Jesus Christ. Whatever accords with the teaching of Jesus Christ will be abiding. We come then to the question, What was the attitude of Christ to the Old Testament?

Of one thing we may be certain: The Old Testament was Christ's Bible, and He was well conversant with it. On more than one occasion in His disputes with the Pharisees, He showed intimate acquaintance with the Old Testament, and drew heavily upon it (Matt. 21:16). Like the Jewish Rabbis of His time, He emphasized the divinity of the law and found spiritual life in it (John 5:39). He accepted absolutely every precept of the Old Testament. Even the *lex talionis* of Exodus 21:24, "an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth," He left standing as a basis, so to speak, of His own higher mandate, which Matthew Arnold has very appropriately called "the secret of Jesus," passively under trial (Matt. 5:38–41). Jesus abrogated nothing. As some one has well said, "No one save Jesus had the right to lay the law aside, and He made it immortal."

He explicitly stated, "I came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill"; adding that "not one jot or tittle" should pass away from the law till all things be accomplished (Matt. 5:17, 18). Jesus, too, spoke as a lawgiver: "But I say unto you." However, when He proclaimed the Golden Rule, "All things therefore whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, even so do ye also unto them," He very carefully added, "for this is the law and the prophets" (Matt. 7:12). In terms of this Rule, Jesus would obviously have us interpret all Old

Testament commands. He Himself invariably upheld the validity of the written law. What He attacked was the Rabbinic interpretations placed upon it by human commentators and unscrupulous casuists. Rules destroy principles. Through the mechanical rules of exegesis the Rabbis missed the spirit of the Old Testament. It is as unjust to accuse the Old Testament of being responsible for the Pharisaic restrictions of Christ's times, as to charge Christianity with the corruptions of the Roman Church at the time of the Reformation.

Jesus nowhere gives the shadow of a hint that any statement of the Old Testament is inaccurate or needed revision or correction. Jesus, like His people, is distinguished for His originality, but His originality consists not so much in the new truths which He enunciated as in the discoveries of new meaning which He placed on the law and prophecy. Jesus penetrated deep down below the isolated precepts of the Old Testament and unified as well as transformed them. The Old Testament was not simply the foundation of His teaching, not merely the historical prerequisite of His claims, but a constituent element of His message, the background of His thought, even part and parcel of His conception of religion.

When He was asked, for example, which was the greatest commandment, He cited Deut. 6:5 and Lev. 19:18, not merely as individual precepts but as indicating the spirit that gives value to

all obedience; and He emphatically affirmed that upon these two commandments — love to God and love to men — hang suspended the whole law and the prophets. Thus Jesus soared away far above the petty disputes of the schools about the relative worth of isolated precepts, teaching that the sum of man's duty and the germ of all goodness spring from supreme and unlimited love to God. In this way He shifted the center of men's thoughts from conduct to character, from deeds to affections. The Old Testament sages had said, "As a man thinketh in his heart so is he." Jesus said, as a man loves so is he. Duties are unified in love.

The Realized Ideal.

Christ, moreover, actually fulfilled the law and the prophets. He not only recognized Himself as the predicted Messiah, He also realized in Himself the ideal of the prophets. "And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets, he interpreted to them [the two disciples on the way to Emmaus] in all the Scriptures the things concerning himself" (Luke 24: 27). The seers of old had dreamed of an empire which should rule provinces; Jesus established a Kingdom which controls passion and exalts love. His contemporaries indeed were disappointed in Him because He did not establish a temporal kingdom. Nevertheless He realized the spiritual ideals of their illustrious ancestors just as the flower fulfills

the purpose of the bud. "The bud passes away as the flower comes, but it is not destroyed, because it has fulfilled its destiny."[1] In this sense Jesus became the incarnation of the law as well as the incarnation of love.

Our Attitude to the Old Testament.

Christ's attitude to the Old Testament must determine ours. He is God, He is Truth. Following Christ's example, some of the greatest thinkers the race has ever produced, as Gladstone, have recognized that in the Old Testament we have inherited from the Jewish Church a very precious legacy. Bishop Westcott, one of the very greatest New Testament scholars of modern times, freely acknowledges that the Old Testament is an essential part of the Christian's Bible. The fact that it teaches the simplest elements of religion, and begins with the utmost rudiments of truth, such as are contained in Genesis, does not destroy its abiding value. We do not discard the alphabet when we begin to read. We do not remove the base of a pyramid in order to study its apex.

Through the Old Testament the ancient world still speaks most eloquently. Human nature is a constant quantity. The types described in the Old Testament are typical and practical. Consequently we dare assert that the Old Testament

[1] Barton, The Roots of Christian Teaching as Found in the Old Testament, p. 269.

is destined, because of its inherent merit, to continue a fresh fountain of living truth, which will ever help to invigorate and restore, to purify and refine, to ennoble and enrich the moral and spiritual well-being of mankind.

Who can possibly estimate the moral influence of the Old Testament upon the race! So long as sin exists in the world there will continue to be need of the Ten Commandments. So long as greed and selfishness are found among men there will be the necessity of Law. Law is not annulled by love; rather love carries on its work in a law-governed sphere. Even the hygienic laws of Leviticus are not yet obsolete, neither will they be obsolete so long as statisticians tell us that the average age of Gentile life is 27 years while that of Jewish is 37. So long as men are tried and tested, the Book of Job will be imperishable; so long as old age overtakes the sons of men, the Book of Ecclesiastes will furnish timely instruction to boys and girls to remember also their Creator in the days of their youth; so long as the race knows sorrow and sighing the Shepherd Psalm will remain immortal; "for though it came from an Oriental heart and is expressed in terms of Oriental experience, it deals with the deep things of life with a simplicity so noble that it touches the heart of every generation.[1]

The chief enemy of the Old Testament is ignorance of it. For more than two millenniums

[1] McFadyen, The City with Foundations, p. 201.

the Old Testament has circulated among men, as Dr. Barton expresses it, "revealing the heart of man to himself, holding before human eyes the law of God, awakening the conscience, unfolding the story of the Father's forgiveness in Christ, and forming by its lofty teaching the characters of the saints." And it is destined, I firmly believe, to live on so long as true religion holds sway over human hearts; for, though we may put more knowledge into our worship than did the ancient Hebrews, we shall hardly be able to put in more reality.

The one supreme immortal element in the Old Testament is *faith in the only true and living God.* The one outstanding portrait which it paints is that of one ineffable Face, before which stands the soul in joyful converse and immortal faith. The Old Testament postulates FAITH as the great central fact of religion.

In short, the faith that makes heroes, gives substance to things hoped for and reality to things as yet not seen; which was illustrated in the many Old Testament worthies, who "through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the power of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, from weakness were made strong, waxed mighty in war, turned to flight armies of aliens" (Hebs. 11: 33, 34). Such faith in concrete form we find inimitably depicted in countless Old Testament characters. Surely

the faith of such men will live on and on forever; and not only their biographies, but their writings will continue to be recognized by the Christian Church as indeed "profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness." So that with Emerson, we may well affirm —

> The word unto the prophets spoken
> Was writ on tables yet unbroken.

The Soil of Christianity.

In conclusion, therefore, the Old Testament must be regarded as an essential part of the Word of God. It has intrinsic value of its own; it is the interpreter of the New Testament; Paul recognized its eternal validity; Jesus Christ magnified it and made it honorable; and every thorough Bible student recognizes its intrinsic worth.

To the Christian it has perennial value, because it supplies the soil out of which Christianity has sprung. Such an one will consequently read it carefully and ponder it; he will likewise assimilate it, live it and obey it; for unless he obey it, it will not yield itself to him. There is an esoteric element in the Old Testament; spiritual things are spiritually discerned. He will read it devotionally as well as study it critically. Even the New Testament specialist must be conversant with it. In fact he cannot understand the New Testament without it.

Moreover, for an appreciation of the full mes-

sage of the Old Testament, it must be studied in the closet, and its promises tested in the actual intercourse of daily life. The greatest care must be taken to catch its spiritual significance. Such an exercise demands time, but the rewards are worthy of the effort. Of no other book is the motto of the old Schoolman more appropriate: "We should prepare a man for the world by taking him out of the world for a while, to be influenced, not by the spirit of the age, but by the spirit of the ages." The spirit of the ages is the Spirit of God, and the spirit of the Old Testament is none other than the spirit of the Gospel. Truth is continuous. "Divine revelation is all of one piece."

VI

Bible Study the Great Way into Life's Values

HENRY CHURCHILL KING

Is the insistent demand for Bible study justified? If it is, we ought to be able to see that Bible study has a broad, philosophical basis, that it is knit up with the great values of life, that the biblical way is the great way into life's values; that, in fact, there is no way so certain to the largest life.

For the age in which we live, though it is not an irreligious age, is a realistic age, an age with a passion for reality, for real life. The feeling of our time is rightly voiced in Tennyson's lines:

> 'T is life whereof our nerves are scant,
> More life and fuller that I want."

The desire for life is not only the desire of our time, but is also the point of Christ's own challenge; he comes that men may have life, and that they may have it abundantly. Christianity has, therefore, no need to shrink from this test. It fully believes, as MacDonald said, that religion

is life, and not merely the food or the medicine or the adornment of life. And it is so insistent upon Bible study just because it believes it to be the best of all ways to the largest life. Is religion life? and is Bible study such a pre-eminent way to life? If it is not so, we cannot afford it the time demanded; if it is so, we need to know and to heed it.

Character, Influence and Happiness.

We shall readily grant, in the first place, that *the great values of life* — what is really worth while — must involve the achievement of character, of influence, and of happiness, and no one can come into the largest life without achievement along all these lines. To be what one ought, to count as one can, to enjoy what one may — this is really worth while; and any way of life must show us the way to these basic values.

For satisfying life looks, in the first place, to *character.* We may not forget Thomas Arnold's words to the boys of Rugby, "The only thing of moment in life or in man is character"; or, as another has put it, "The great soul will be strong to live as well as to think." No life can come to its best into which there have not been built mighty convictions, mighty decisions, and the inspiration of great ideals and hopes.

Nor can the genuine man be satisfied without *influence,* without counting effectively for good in the lives of others. He must demand from

himself social efficiency, must be sure that he can be counted a part of that leaven that is to leaven the world's life, of that "good seed" which is the children of the Kingdom.

And the man who means really to live has a right to expect a deep and abiding peace and *happiness* that are something more than satisfaction of the senses, a happiness that can stand four-square to all the facts of life. In comparing one of the madonnas of Correggio at the Dresden Gallery with the great Sistine madonna of Raphael in the same gallery, Kedney says that while each is a masterpiece in its own line, the loveliness of Correggio's picture is that of a domestic felicity which seems capable of abiding only so long as the world is shut out and its dark facts forgotten, while the suffused calm of the Sistine madonna and child is to be read in the eyes of both, that do not forget the world, but look out with assurance into the eternities of God. A basic happiness like that must belong to the man who means really to live. The message of Jesus Christ is a word of good news, the best that could ever be brought to needy men; it means happiness, as well as character and influence.

Association with Significant Lives.

And if one asks, in the second place, what *the great means* to character, and influence, and happiness are, there seems no doubt that one must answer — *Personal association with signifi-*

cant lives, and some sharing in their best vision. There are no other means for a moment comparable with these for the achievement of either character, or influence, or happiness. Even Kant, abstract philosopher as he was, knew that the great road to character was by the living example. Fichte caught up the message from Kant and rang it out over the heads of the students of the University of Erlangen in his great addresses on "The Vocation of Man" and "The Nature of the Scholar," with their great conception of the scholar as the embodiment of the "Divine Idea," who must powerfully touch the lives of others. And Carlyle caught it up from Fichte in his "Sartor Resartus," and George Eliot from Carlyle; and perhaps no one has given it finer expression than she, when she says: "Ideas are often poor ghosts; our sun-filled eyes cannot discern them — they pass athwart us in their vapor, and cannot make themselves felt. But sometimes they are made flesh; they breathe upon us with warm breath, they touch us with soft, responsive hands, they look at us with sad, sincere eyes, and speak to us in appealing tones; they are clothed in a living human soul, with all its conflicts, its faith, and its love. Then their presence is a power, then they shake us like a passion, and we are drawn after them with gentle compulsion, as flame is drawn to flame."

In fact, when one stops to think about it, one

sees there are *only two services of supreme value* that it seems possible for any man to do for another: he may lay upon that other the impress of a high and noble character, and he may share with him his own best vision. Beyond these there is no service of supreme value that he can render. And these two services are our supreme need from others' lives, and our own greatest task in life. The great road to character, and influence, and happiness is the contagion of great lives and the sharing in their visions.

The Effective Witness.

It follows, in the third place, that the *greatest conceivable need* for ourselves or for others is high and significant *personalities,* and the chance of sharing in their effective *witness* to those great interests and personalities by which they live. And the significant personalities that above all else we need are those that are marked by great convictions and great decisions, and are inspired by great ideals and hopes. It is the touch of such lives that we need most of all; nothing else can so surely bring us into the largeness of life. But the degree in which we can enter into the largeness of their vision will depend in no small part upon the effectiveness of their own witness. And all men need effective witness from other men as to those values and personalities by which they live. What are the qualities required in such an effective witness? If the service

rendered at this point is supreme, as I believe it to be, it is worth while to make clear to ourselves exactly what *the qualities of the effective witness* must be.

So far as I can see, they are four: first, conviction; second, character and judgment in the sphere in which one bears witness; third, disinterested love; and, fourth, power to put one's witness home.

First of all, that witness counts most with us who speaks manifestly out of profound *conviction* of his own. This conviction of his goes further with us than the very reasons that he urges on its behalf.

And the second quality of the effective witness indicates how impossible it is to separate power in service from power of personality. For, in the last analysis, weighing testimony is weighing witnesses, and no man is finally going to count powerfully with us in whose *character* we cannot have confidence, and whose *judgment* we cannot trust. A few words from the man of character and judgment will go further than much eloquence from a man in whose character we do not believe, and whose judgment we do not trust.

And the effective witness, in the third place, must speak with evident *disinterestedness.* It must be plain that he has no merely private interest to serve, no selfish scheme of his own to further, but that in the witness he bears he

genuinely seeks the good of those to whom he speaks. Back of all witness of words, thus, must lie, above all, the witness of the life of conviction, of character and judgment, of disinterested love.

And the witness of such men cannot well fail, though their power of speech is small indeed. And yet, the fourth element of the effective witness is not without importance. A man may add greatly to his effectiveness for good because he has power to put his witness home. And that, it may perhaps be said, means exactly three things — power to make his testimony to the cause or person or interest of which he speaks *real, rational,* and *vital.*

It sometimes seems to me that the Christian witness particularly needs to have these three demands continually in mind. It is his business, above all, to make Christ and the things of the spirit *real* to men, able to take their place among the steadfast realities of their life; *rational,* with steadfast appeal to their best reason, knit up with the very best thinking that they are able to do in any line; and *vital,* drawn from life, with motives for life, translatable continuously into life.

These, then, it seems to me, are our greatest needs: the contagion of high and significant personalities — that is, personalities characterized by great convictions, decisions, ideals, and hopes — and the opportunity of sharing in their effec-

tive witness, a witness that grows out of conviction, character and judgment, and disinterested love, and that is so brought home as to be made to us real, rational, and vital. It is no accident, therefore, that the program of Christianity should be, as my colleague, Professor Bosworth, has said, the conquest of the world by a campaign of testimony, through empowered witnesses. For this is the way by which we come into all the great values of life. It could not fail to be the way into the supreme values of life, brought by the highest of all religions.

Personality in the Old and New Testaments.

Just here, then, it seems to me, is to be found the basic reason for the pre-eminent importance of Bible study. The great mission and priceless value of the Bible are that it puts us in touch with the most significant lives of the world, in the greatest realm, that of the moral and spiritual — the lives that we need most of all, because religion is the great unlocker of the powers of men. Here, thus, in the Bible, we have the opportunity of staying in the presence of the best. If Kaftan was right in saying that our chief task is to enter with appreciative understanding into the great personalities of history, then our greatest task is to be able so to enter into the lives embodied in this record of revelation. The Bible has, in other words, a supreme place just because it does put us in touch with

the most significant personalities of history — the great line of the prophets, culminating in Christ; and because it contains the most effective witness to moral and spiritual values that the world knows.

Where else shall one turn to find a line of personalities so grounded in the greatest convictions that men can have, so embodying the mighty decisions of the moral and spiritual life, so moved by the highest ideals and inspired with the largest hopes? Here lies the inestimable value of the modern historical study of the Bible. For it enables us, as never before, to enter with intelligent sympathy into the personal lives of the Bible record, to find them living persons. To a degree true of no preceding generation, this generation is able to enter into the actual situation, for example, of the prophets, to see their problem, their life task, and the message that it was given them to utter; and their greatness so comes home to us as never before. So the free critic Cornill can say of Amos, "Amos is one of the most marvelous and incomprehensible figures in the history of the human mind, the pioneer of a process of evolution from which a new epoch of humanity dates." And Hosea he counts "among the greatest religious geniuses which the world has ever produced"; and he says of Isaiah, "In Isaiah we find for the first time a clearly grasped conception of universal history." It is into the presence of such personalities that

the modern historical study of the Bible introduces us. To a degree never before true, the Bible lives for us; of it we may well use Lowell's phrase, and say that it is "rammed with life." One cannot put the point of a needle into it anywhere without drawing blood.

Where else, too, shall one turn for such effective witness to moral and spiritual values? Where else are the personalities to be found who speak as those who have seen the verities of the moral and spiritual world, whose message comes out of such conviction, such character and judgment, with such manifest disinterestedness of love? Who else have power to make the things of the spirit so real, so rational, so vital? These personalities of the Scripture are truly the moral and religious leaders of the race.

As the record of the pre-eminent meetings of the men of the ancient time with God, even the Old Testament gives us what else we could not have, a genetic understanding of Christianity, and the transcript of our own individual experience writ large. This generation can least of all spare the Old Testament; for college students are studying almost every subject they take up by the biological method. The great concept of evolution in its larger sense is a dominant one, and the students of our time are trying to understand their subjects genetically. It would hardly be possible to satisfy this generation without such a genetic undertanding of Christianity, and that

genetic understanding requires a study of the Old Testament. So strongly do we feel this that the modern man would be almost tempted to reproduce out of his imagination the record of such a preceding growth, if we did not have it in the Old Testament. In the same way we are trying to understand our individual lives in the light of the record of the race; and in this aspect, too, the Old Testament has for us profound significance as a record of a race-experience, like that experience through whose stages we ourselves must largely pass. In the Old and New Testaments alike we have the opportunity, too, of sharing in no small measure in the best insights of the greatest spiritual seers that the world has known.

The Presence of Christ.

But above all, in the New Testament, the Bible brings us back into the concrete presence of the historical Christ, and to the sense of His practical lordship. No generation the world has ever seen has witnessed such study of His life as has this generation of ours. It is not an accident that every life of Christ worth reading, outside the Gospels, has been written since the year 1835. To our time, too, belongs the whole rise of the great science of biblical theology, to our time the most searching studies in the teaching of Jesus. Men have been brought face to face with the life and spirit and teaching of Jesus as never before,

and it is a reasonable thing to expect the best Christian preaching and the best Christian living the world has ever seen to be just ahead of us, not behind us. For, in spite of all the questions that are raised, the practical lordship of Christ is becoming daily more manifest; never before did His spirit rule so truly in industry, in commerce, in politics national and international. And while we are still only at the beginning of that complete lordship that belongs to Him, we have the greatest reasons for faith and hope. And it is through the witness of these earliest disciples, who "beheld His glory," that there is given to us this priceless vision "of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ."

The Pre-eminent Need of the Twentieth Century.

And it especially concerns us men of the twentieth century to remember that it is *exactly we who, above all, need Christ for any sure way to God.* For this generation has awakened to scientific and moral self-consciousness to an extent never before true. Just because there is this scientific consciousness on the one hand, and this deeper moral consciousness on the other, many of the older ways into the religious life are for us closed. I do not say that the New Hollander or the African has had no genuine religious experience. I do not say that any race has been without some genuine relation to God. But I

do say that for us men of the twentieth century the ways by which most of them came into their religious experience are for us closed ways. The facts that were sufficient for them are not sufficient for us. If we are to find our way into assured personal relation to God, it must be by way of a person able to call out absolute trust. For, in Herrmann's language, "the childlike spirit can only arise within us when our experience is the same as a child's; in other words, when we meet with a personal life which compels us to trust it without reserve. Only the person of Jesus can arouse such trust in a man who has awakened to moral self-consciousness. If such a man surrenders himself to anything or any one else, he throws away not only his trust but himself." We need for assured relation to God a fact so great that in it we can unmistakably find God, and He find us — a fact great enough to bring us renewed conviction of the certainty of moral ideals, of the spiritual world, of the living God. And it is this conviction that the personality of Jesus is able to bring us, with a certainty and strength that no other fact or person can approach; so that we can say with Harnack, "When God and everything that is sacred threaten to disappear in darkness, or our doom is pronounced; when the mighty forces of inexorable nature seem to overwhelm us, and the bounds of good and evil to dissolve; when, weak and weary, we despair of finding God at all in

this dismal world — it is then that the personality of Christ may save us."

To Stay in His Presence.

The man of the modern age, thus, needs Christ in pre-eminent degree. But we are put face to face with the personality of Jesus only through the New Testament as the witness of His first disciples. The greatest of all our tasks, therefore, becomes at the same time our supreme opportunity — to stay in His presence, and to let Him make His legitimate impression upon us. All values of every kind go back ultimately to the riches of some personal life, and there are no riches like those of the world's greatest personalities; above all, like the unsearchable riches of Christ.

> Then stand before that fact, that Life and Death,
> Stay there at gaze, till it dispart, dispread,
> As tho' a star should open out, all sides,
> Grow the world on you, as it is my world.

The Bible thus becomes our great way to character and influence and happiness. In touch with its great personalities, we are quickened into life, as we feel the impress of their character and share their witness. In such study, too, the qualities of effective witness are produced and deepened in us. It is thus that we come into life; for it is literally true to say of many a man who feels deeply the modern spirit and yet who has stayed persistently in the presence of Christ, that in all the higher ranges of his life he lives

by Christ; all the sources of his life are in Christ.

In such considerations as these lies the great reason for Bible study, for insistence on such study, as the supreme way into life's values.

VII

Why Should Every Young Man Read and Study the Bible?

JAMES McCONAUGHY

My message is to the young man of today; to one and all in town or country. Nor do I forget the boys, who are soon to be young men. Let me tell you a conviction that has grown out of twenty years' experience, and let me give you some of the reasons for it.

Every young man who reads at all should regularly give to the Bible the highest place in his reading. Further, he cannot read it intelligently and with appreciation until he gives to it — and the earlier in life he begins the better — some faithful and systematic study. As well expect to become a skilled typewriter by occasionally drumming on the keyboard or a leading athlete by cheering from the "bleachers" as expect to appreciate and profit by the masterpiece of the world's literature by keeping a copy of it on your bookshelf. You hear it preached from by your favorite minister, or perhaps you listen while your Sunday-school teacher talks to you about it. Good

as far as it goes, but is it farther than the visitors' gallery? Why not come down on to the floor, be a worker, not a spectator?

It costs something, you say; takes time, requires you to give up other pleasures, other engagements. Granted. Let me show you that it returns a hundred-fold; that you must take time for it if you are to do well the work of life; that, pursued heartily and faithfully, it will prove *re-creation* indeed, and send you into the day's work with a glow of spirit finer than any glow of body that follows a run, a dip and a rub-down.

I

To start with, what *do* you read or study? Next to your associates, what you *read* determines what you *are*.

The Bible and the Newspaper.

Many of you, if frank, will answer, "Little or nothing except the daily newspaper."

It is cheap — at least until you multiply the price by the number you buy in a year. It does not require any great mental effort. What effect does it have on your mind? on your tastes? on your character? But one must know what is going on, you say. Everything? How much of what you read yesterday do you remember? How much has left you any wiser or better? How much had you better never have read? Would

you be a strong man, with a mind that thinks and a character that weighs? If so, *you must be master of your reading,* not let it master you. Read your daily, but (1) select the cleanest and ablest. Boycott the journalism which is well called " yellow," for it has in it neither blood nor purity. In the best of dailies there will be more to skip than to read, so (2) read the headlines, and beyond that what is really worth reading. Keep abreast of the movements in your own community toward social improvement and civic righteousness; of the affairs of nations which affect our own national welfare and the progress of God's Kingdom throughout the earth. Skip personalities, scandal, crimes, gossip, everything that leaves the trail of the serpent on your brain.

Hold yourself to such a course, and who of you will not gain some time daily for the reading of literature that is more worth while because less transient?

Do you read a newspaper that boasts of its circulation? The Bible has circulated 250,000,000 copies and every year shows an increase on the preceding. Does your paper proclaim its enterprise and claim readers in distant towns? The Bible belts the globe. The whole or parts of it may be read in 380 different languages and dialects, and 120 of these were but *spoken* tongues until the Bible came, in the vanguard of civilization, to call into existence an alphabet and a

literature. To two-thirds of the human race the Bible is now accessible in the native tongue.

Does your paper report the words and acts of the great men of our day? Make the closer acquaintance of "the great strong beings like Moses, and David, and Isaiah, and Daniel, and Paul, and John, and Peter, who," as Phillips Brooks has said, "stand forth as manifestations of that vital power with which the Bible is filled from end to end."

Have you thought the Bible stale, an antique, a "back number"? No book in the world is as much alive today. The Nestor of American journalism himself, Charles A. Dana, of the *New York Sun,* speaking to Cornell students, referred to a thorough acquaintance with the Bible as a pre-eminent qualification for success in journalism.

Do you seek in the papers for information that will lead to success in business? The editor of another New York paper was asked by a correspondent to name a few of the best books for a young man in business. This was his reply: "The best single treatise is the New Testament; next to this is the Proverbs of Solomon. The best business man we have ever known memorized the entire book of Proverbs at twenty-two, carrying a ten-cent edition in his pocket and committing half a dozen verses daily. When he became an employer he gave a copy to every employee, recommending it as an admirable business guide."

Now Proverbs is neither the kernel nor the crown of the Bible. Isaiah, and John, and Paul, and above all Jesus Himself, were wiser and greater than Solomon. There are higher considerations to incite to Bible study than these utilitarian ones; but are not these sufficient to show that no young man in our day can neglect the Bible without serious loss to himself?

The Bible and the Magazine.

Next to the newspaper in its hold upon the reading public of today is the weekly or monthly periodical. Not a few of these circulate from one to five hundred thousand copies of each issue. Here again the word is *discriminate.* Decide how much time you have for such reading and how it can best be spent. Exclude (1) those that are positively harmful — when you have once seen a picture or read a line that soils your brain, forever after let that periodical alone; (2) those that simply waste your time — the name of these is legion.

To appreciate and digest those that remain a good knowledge of the Bible is invaluable. In the *Young Men's Era* for March 3, 1892, Mr. Wm. D. Murray told how he was impressed, in reading one of the popular magazines, with the frequent recurrence, in secular articles, of Bible phraseology, or quotation, or reference. On counting he found in that single number forty-

nine direct quotations from or references to nineteen different books of the Bible.

One of the best magazine writers of his day, Charles Dudley Warner, had this to say in the Editor's Study of *Harper's Monthly:* "A fair knowledge of the Bible is in itself almost a liberal education, as many great masters in literature have testified. It has so entered into law, literature, thought, the whole modern life of the Christian world, that ignorance of it is a most serious disadvantage to the student." To the neglect of Bible study he traces the prevalent moral laxity and the political corruption of our day.

The Bible and Other Literature.

So in reading books, the book to read above all others is the Book that lives above all others. The Bible in Latin was the first book to be printed with movable type. The English Bible is our greatest English classic, and all that is best in our literature is permeated by its style and thought. To its influence on our best prose Professor Cook of Yale brings a cloud of witnesses in his little book on "The Bible and English Prose Style." When he crowns his illustrations with an extract from Lincoln's second inaugural, it is well for the young man of today who has free access to public libraries to know that Lincoln's library in his log-cabin home consisted of four books — the Bible, Bunyan's Pil-

grim's Progress, Burns's Poems, and Weems' Life of Washington.

Its influence on our poets has been even greater. It was Shakespeare who wrote of

> those holy fields
> Over whose acres walked those blessed feet
> Which fourteen hundred years ago were nailed
> For our advantage on the bitter cross,

and essays have been written to show how much he is indebted to the Scriptures.

Who that has learned to love Browning at all does not know something of the faith that breathes in his "Saul," "A Death in the Desert," "Prospice," or "Rabbi Ben Ezra"? Blot out the Bible's influence from Whittier, Longfellow, Lowell, and what would remain? From Tennyson van Dyke has gathered page after page of selections alluding to scriptural scenes or truths and published them in an appendix to his "Poetry of Tennyson."

The *Independent,* of November 8, 1894, published an article from "a college president," describing the results of a test made with a score of the most familiar of these on an entering Freshman class. More than half were entirely ignorant of "Ruth amid the fields of corn," "Pharaoh's darkness," "Joshua's moon in Ajalon," "the strange angel which of old wrestled with wandering Israel," "Jonah's gourd," "Arimathean Joseph," and even of "the deathless angel seated in

the vacant tomb." How much better could you have done? This college president located the cause of this ignorance in the fact that "the Bible has become buried beneath a landslide of books and periodicals. People read far more than of old; but they read the Bible far less."

If this indictment convicts you, face the situation and change it. *Give the Bible the first place in your reading.*

The Bible and Other Branches of Study.

The Bible is not only the crown of literature; it is the science of sciences, the core of knowledge.

Says Professor Bowen in "A Layman's Study of the English Bible": "It is not too much to say that the books of the Old and New Testaments have exerted more influence, whether for weal or woe, on the course of human affairs among civilized nations than all other books put together. Their imprint is on most of the literature, the philosophy, the legislation and the history of the last seventeen hundred years."

Finney's biographer tells us that, in trying to master Blackstone's Commentaries and other law books, he found constant reference made to the Mosaic institutions, as if it were acknowledged by jurists that there the foundation of all law, as of all morality, was to be found. So the lawyer's clerk, who had already decided that there was nothing in Christianity for him, bought a Bible and began to read it from cover to cover.

It spoiled him for the law but made him one of the greatest spiritual leaders of his generation.

Ruskin, the great art critic, in his autobiography, tells how his mother "established his soul in life" by making him not merely read but commit large portions of the Bible. He prints the lists of chapters which he thus learned and testifies: "To that discipline, patient, accurate and resolute, I owe much of my general power of taking pains, and the best part of my taste in literature. I count it, very confidently, the most precious, and, on the whole, the one essential part of my education."

Prof. W. H. Thomson, M.D., held for many years in New York city a unique position of influence. A high authority in medical science, he taught each Sunday a Bible class composed of hundreds of intelligent men and women. In an address he once said: "The reason for this impossibility of exhausting the Bible, so that it can be once and for all disposed of, is simply because somehow it touches every conceivable point of human history, experience and investigation so singularly that, for example, the geologist, the philologist, the ethnologist, the historian, the literary critic, the philosopher, as well as the man in every department of life, finds in it what seems to concern himself very particularly."

Whatever else you study, therefore, do not neglect the Bible. Find in it what concerns *you*.

"Give diligence" to its "handling," as Paul

exhorted Timothy to do, and you will find it not only an awakener of thought, a cultivator of taste, a guide to truth, but a fountain of life, as did Finney, and as does every man who comes to it with an open mind and an earnest and teachable spirit.

The Bible and Other Religious Books.

Bible study in earnest, pursued with system and prayer, removes weakness from Christian life and service. Are you unaccustomed to study of any sort, absorbed only in life's routine? Stir up the gifts, both mental and physical, that are in you, and concentrate them on the Bible. On the Bible itself, more than on books written about it or drawn from it.

Even devotional books, intended as helps, may be so used as to crowd out the Bible. Phillips Brooks well said, "Religious people read thin, superficial books of religious sentiment, but do not meet face to face the strong, exacting, masculine pages of their Bibles."

Do not his adjectives explain the reason for his statement? The Bible is never superficial, never thin. Simple indeed in great part it is, so that even a child or a plantation negro may delight in it, but always profound. "In this book," said Ewald, the great historian, to Dean Stanley, "is all the wisdom of the world." Why be satisfied with water-jug or bottle when the spring itself is at hand? The Bible is exacting, too. It de-

mands your best, of thought, prayer, love, obedience. Give it its due and it will repay you a hundred-fold.

It was often said of men like Moody or Spurgeon, "He is a man of one book." What does it mean? Mr. Moody's study is lined with books. One of Mr. Spurgeon's biographers tells us that during a part of his life he read two new books a day. That could not mean careful reading of every page, but he had learned by much practice how to rapidly extract the juice as he would squeeze an orange. Yet it was Spurgeon that said, "I would like to see a huge pile of all the books, good and bad, that were ever written, prayer-books and sermons, and hymn-books, and all, smoking like Sodom of old, if the reading of these books keeps you away from the reading of the Bible; for a ton weight of human literature is not worth an ounce of Scripture, one single drop of the essential tincture of the Word of God is better than a sea full of our commentings and sermonizings, and the like."

Let the simple test for all our reading then be this: "Is this paper, this article, this book better fitting me to appreciate and understand the Bible, or am I letting it take the Bible's place?"

The current page that tells of the world's progress, or of its misery and need, should lead back with whetted appetite to the pages that tell of God's plans for the world and of God's

supplies for human need; the most abstract mathematics or logic should develop the accurate thinking that better grasps Bible truth; the observation of nature and her wonders should lead reverently to the greater wonders of revelation; faithful portraiture of human life and conduct should lead back to the one book which best describes men both as they are and as God means them to be. Do they do so in your case? If not, your use of them must be *misuse*.

It is related of Alexander Duff, the great missionary to India, who spent his last years in teaching theology in New College, Edinburgh, that he loved to tell his students this story of his outward voyage to India. He was a great lover of the classics, and took special delight in the library of carefully selected volumes which friends had furnished as a part of his missionary outfit. In rounding the Cape of Good Hope the vessel was wrecked and nearly everything on board lost. As the passengers gathered about a fire on the beach a sailor brought to Dr. Duff a book which had been washed ashore, and asked him if it was his. It proved to be his Bible, wrinkled and discolored by sea water, but still legible. He took it as an omen from Heaven, and from that hour, though always a leader in education, he made the Bible central in his thought and study and teaching.

The Bible and Character.

The Bible is the one book that contains the message which transforms life, whether in Scotland or India, America or the heart of Africa. A Scotch boy, nine years old, won the prize his pastor had offered by repeating from memory the whole 119th Psalm "with only five hitches." David Livingstone, scientist, explorer, missionary, carried the New Testament he thus won across Africa from ocean to ocean, and so hid its truths in his heart and exemplified them in his dealings with native tribes that when Stanley followed on his track their dark faces lit up at mention of his name. The American newspaper correspondent, in the weeks he spent with Livingstone on Lake Tanganyika and its shores, got a new vision of the Christ in the face of His herald to Africa, of whom he wrote: "In him religion exhibits its loveliest features; it governs his conduct not only toward his servants, but toward the natives, the bigoted Mahometans, and all who come in contact with him."

When Stanley went to Africa the second time he carried with him a beautifully bound Bible, the gift to him of Livingstone's sister. When he visited Uganda he read from it to its king, Mtesa. When he had gone two hundred miles farther a messenger reached him, crying out that Mtesa wanted the book, and it was sent to him. A few years later, when, by the labors of Mackay and other missionaries, a written language had been

created in Uganda, and the New Testament translated and printed in it, Uganda Christians, who a dozen years before had never heard of the true God and Jesus Christ, gladly paid the wages of three months' hard labor to own a copy of it. These same Christians have proved their faith "at the stake, under the knobstick, and under torture unto death."

They were the stuff that martyrs are made of, but it takes the Bible to make such martyrs. Well did Professor Drummond say that what we need, whether in Scotland or in America, today, is "not more men, but more man." It is Gladstone, who was guided throughout the greatest career of this century by the principles of the Bible, than whom, we are told, no man of his day at Oxford read his Bible more or knew it better, who testifies from the ripe experience of his old age, "My only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind into contact with divine revelation."

The attempt to build character without the Bible is doomed to failure. President G. Stanley Hall of Clark University, in addressing the Connecticut Valley Congregational Club on "The Teaching of Morals," referred to a collection he had made of more than three hundred different text-books used in schools and colleges to teach ethics as "a mongrel library." He urged that "to cultivate morality one must appeal, as the Bible does, to the moral sense rather than to

reason. Hence life must be leavened with religion and children infected with Christianity." Professor Huxley, whose testimony would certainly not be biased by any prejudice toward Christianity, writes, "I have been seriously perplexed to know how the religious feeling, which is the essential basis of conduct, can be kept up without the use of the Bible."

Let us, then, take as our motto the words which Wesley wrote on the fly-leaf of his Bible, "Live today." On each day's threshold, as the old Aryan greeted the sun, let us meet with Him whose "life is the light of men," and go into the world with His light on our faces.

Rebuke the heresy that the Bible is the book for the pulpit, but not for the shop and the office. One of the most useful Christians I have known is neither a minister nor an evangelist, but a business man. For thirty years or more he has taught every Sunday a great Bible class of men, and the weeks have been full of such contact with these and other men, and such service for them in Christ's name, as have made his life a constant fountain of living water.

Seven Reasons for Bible Study.

To sum up, every young man should make the Bible central in his reading and study:

1. Because it is the most alive and widely studied book in the world today.

2. Because the English Bible is the greatest classic in our literature.

3. Because its study enlarges one's horizon and brings one in touch with the most earnest and self-sacrificing spirits of this and of every age.

4. Because to know it helps one to appreciate all else that is best in literature.

5. Because it touches and crowns all other branches of knowledge.

6. Because it is God's appointed means for the development of noble Christian character.

7. Because it contains God's message of grace and power for the full salvation of the needy world in which He has placed us.

How to Get to Work.

And now if the resolution is formed, a hint or two about putting it into effect may be helpful.

1. *Read the Bible as if it were a new book just from the press.* Use the Revised Version, if for no other reason, because it is printed in the paragraph form with which your mind is familiar in other books. Let the Sunday newspaper alone, if you have been in the habit of reading it, and sit down for an hour to the Gospel of Mark or the story of Abraham or Joseph or David or Ruth or Nehemiah. I risk the prophecy that there will not be a page even of these familiar narratives on which you will fail to find something fresh and beautiful and suggestive for your own life.

Buy a volume or two of the Modern Reader's

Bible series at any book-store. They are small and cheap and easily carried in the pocket. Take one with you on the cars and give it some of the time the daily paper usually gets. If you love poetry, begin with the Job or Isaiah volume. The method of printing will make it a new book to you. If you are fond of public speaking, try Deuteronomy and see how fine Moses's farewell orations are. If you are a keen observer of life, try Proverbs, which lends itself easily to fragmentary reading. Once started, follow your own tastes, but go on until you begin to feel that you are really making the Bible's acquaintance.

It is related of Matthew Arnold, the English essayist, that he once said to Charles Reade, the novelist: "The old Bible is getting to be to us literary men of England a sealed book. I wish you would take up the Old Testament and go through it as though every page of it were altogether new to you. I think it will astonish you." Reade entered on the undertaking with the zeal which characterized all his work. The result was, he not only became astonished at his discoveries, but became a sincere and humble Christian. Not least among the books he has left behind is the group of sketches of "Bible Characters" which he wrote late in his life.

2. *Join a Bible class.* It was a man of ability, who stood at the very head of financial circles in his nation, who, to Philip's question, "Understandest thou what thou readest?" (Acts 8: 30),

did not hesitate to reply, "How can I, except some one shall guide me?" The men who have studied the Bible most are the very ones who are most ready to learn from any other Spirit-filled man.

If you are able to choose, begin with a class which is studying the life of Christ. This is the heart of revelation, to be studied over and over again. After you have made a beginning with it you are better able to go back and see how all Old Testament history, law and prophecy were a preparation for it, and how the apostolic history and teachings are its development.

3. *Begin every day with devotional Bible reading.* Form the habit and plan the day so as to provide for it. Go to bed fifteen minutes or a half-hour earlier than you have been accustomed to, so as to gain that time in the freshness of the morning. If this requires sacrifice, be willing to make it, and be as faithful in your appointment with God as in your business engagements. Here, as in a Bible class, a systematic plan is essential to profit.

4. Never forget that *it is through His Word that God now speaks to men.* In the earliest times He spoke to men in visions and dreams, or mouth to mouth as to Moses (Num. 12:6–8). When the temple was built, its innermost sanctuary, the holy of holies, was called "the oracle" (I Kings 8: 6), the place where God would speak to His people, and there He spake with

Isaiah (Isaiah 6). Now we have given unto us "the living oracles" (Acts 7: 38); the veil is rent, and we have access into the presence of God. We must enter reverently, with humble but sure reliance on the blood which our Great High Priest has shed for us. We must listen to hear God speak, and then we shall be ready to go out to men, like Moses from God's presence, with faces that shine, though like him we know it not. If the secret of backsliding is found in failure to study and obey God's Word, the secret of much ineffective Christian work is found in bustling activity *for* God without quiet communion *with* God.

In an almshouse in Southern Pennsylvania a blind man sought refuge when seventy years old. He had lived a wicked life. Some ladies came to visit and read the Bible. He remembered the promise he had made to his good wife at her deathbed. He opened his heart to the Gospel and was converted. The Bible was all new to him, and as they read to him on their visits he drank it in as a thirsty man quaffs water. When the supper bell rang, he begged them to go on, "I would rather have you read than go to supper." Even when he had his sight, his education had never gone further than to know his letters. But now, this old blind Christian hungered to learn to read that he might be able to read God's Word for himself. Instruction books for the blind were obtained, and he toiled patiently over them day

after day, with his fingers roughened by years of labor, until he could read the Bible for the blind. He committed and recited perfectly the fifteenth chapter of John. Soon he said to the ladies, "The reading now is nothing to the thinking of it out." Surely the almshouse had become a sanctuary.

He who approaches the Bible in the spirit of this old blind Christian will find for himself the truth of the assurance with which God's great angel closed the highest message ever sent to earth from Heaven:

"NO WORD FROM GOD SHALL BE VOID OF POWER." (Luke 1: 37.)

VIII

Bible Study for Personal Spiritual Growth

JOHN R. MOTT

Let us note at the outset that it is the Bible of which we are to think in this discussion; not books about the Bible, no matter how many, or how helpful, or how accessible they may be. Let us also bear in mind that it is Bible study that is to engage our attention, not the subject of Bible reading, although we might profitably spend much time upon that. Nor are we to consider the subject of Bible listening, although that is almost a lost art in these days. It is Bible *study* which we are to emphasize, with all that the word study means to us as students. Moreover, it is Bible study for personal growth. It is not that form of Bible study designed to equip us to lead others, one by one, to Jesus Christ, although it furnishes an essential part of our equipment for such work. Nor is the object of such study first of all to enable us to help other Christians spiritually, by preparing us to give Bible readings, or to make spiritual talks, or to teach Bible classes, or to guide the Bible study of others, although it will prove invaluable as a preparation for all such

work. It is Bible study for each man's own life which we shall keep clearly before us. It is intensely personal. Its object is personal growth.

What kind of growth is meant? Not growth in knowledge, although the world could far better afford to lose any other sixty-six books than these, viewing them simply as a storehouse of essential knowledge. Not intellectual growth, although it may be stated confidently that there is no other group of writings the study of which affords the same intellectual suggestiveness, grasp, breadth, and power. Above and beyond all this is the meaning of the term to which we shall limit our thought — Bible study for each man's spiritual growth. It is that Bible study which will make us better men tomorrow than today; which will find us far higher up the mountain path of Christian experience a year hence than at present; which enables us to meet God and to hear His voice and to know that it is His voice. It is that Bible study which opens up to us, each day, further and further vistas into the possibilities of the life hid with Christ in God.

The Importance of Devotional Bible Study.

1. To us as Christians. It is the test of true discipleship. Christ says, "If ye abide in My Word, then are ye truly My disciples." We may call ourselves His disciples, but that does not prove that we are. Our names may be on the roll of his professed disciples, but that is not

sufficient proof. The real test is the life, and that is not possible apart from devotional Bible study. If you abide in the Word — that is, if you spend time there, if you dwell there, if you live there — then will you necessarily be a true disciple. Such Bible study alone shows us the needs of our spiritual lives. It reveals to us the weak places in our armor, the points of least resistance in our lives. It shows us ourselves as we are, and therefore as God sees us. Chrysostom says, "The cause of all our evils is our not knowing the Scriptures." Therefore, if we would overcome doubts, temptations, passion, evil imaginations, unclean, unholy, and proud thoughts, let us center our energies upon such study. The devotional study of the Bible alone shows us the possibilities of our spiritual lives. Why be satisfied with living on the dead level or in the valley, if God intends that we be climbing in the peaks? The only place where the great mountain peaks of Christian experience are revealed is in the Scriptures. Would we be Christians of more than ordinary spiritual power? Then we must be great feeders upon the Word, which is not only quick but powerful. De Quincey has divided all knowledge into the literature of knowledge and the literature of power. The sacred writings constitute pre-eminently the literature of power. To have real power with God we must give ourselves to this study. This is clearly taught in the words, "If ye abide in Me,

and My words abide in you, ask whatsoever ye will, and it shall be done unto you." Other helps to spirituality without devotional Bible study may become dangerous. The habit of meditation, for example, without the Bible is likely to lead a man to become morbid and melancholy; whereas, conducted with the aid of the Bible, it is a most healthful process. Secret prayer, moreover, is practically impossible without Bible study, because real prayer is not monologue but dialogue. It requires two to have true communion. We must give God an opportunity to speak to us as well as ourselves an opportunity to speak to Him.

2. To us as Christian teachers. Think over your teachers, either in things intellectual or things spiritual. Which of them helped you the most? Were they not the teachers who had the life behind the words? Devotional Bible study alone gives sincerity. And no one detects insincerity or cant so quickly as the unbelievers who are in our classes or who watch us in other relationships. Moreover, it is noticeable in colleges having the elective system that the best students prefer drinking from a running stream to drinking from a stagnant pool; that is, they prefer to enter the classes of teachers who are themselves growing rather than of those who are giving old material, without at least living over it again. In Australia recently some new gold fields were discovered. We met hundreds of

persons on their way to these new fields. So it is, if a teacher keeps finding new riches he sets all his pupils to digging. If he rejoices with David "as one having found great spoil," many others will be attracted to the search. In a word, therefore, if we would hold the interest, enthusiasm, or even the attendance of Bible classes, let us give attention to enriching our spiritual lives.

3. To us as Christian workers. Would we work without friction, strain, anxiety, worry? Then let us apply ourselves to this kind of Bible study. We may not work so many hours, but we shall accomplish more, and, when we leave, our work will not have to be undone. Without deep devotional study there is danger that our work become purely mechanical. It alone will make our experience fresh, rich, and full, and keep the realities of our faith vivid. If we would shape the work, and not be shaped by it, we must through these studies preserve a strong and ever-expanding inner life. Moreover, our fruitfulness in Christian work is absolutely conditional on our abiding in the Word. Above all, it is impossible to have the power of the Spirit of God as a constant possession apart from the study of the Bible. To do the work of God we must have the power of God. To have the power of God we must have the Spirit of God. The Bible is the channel through which the Spirit comes into the life. We do not find Spirit-filled

men apart from deep, devotional Bible students. If we would be filled with the Spirit, keep filled, and have our capacity constantly increase, let us become possessed with the Bible study passion.

4. To us as Christian leaders. If those over whom God has placed us are to be spiritual, we must be spiritual leaders. The stream never rises above the fountain head. Moreover, if we would be safe leaders we must study with intensity the mind of God concerning our work and problems. The Bible is the principal place where that is revealed. More than all, if we would have the true idea and spirit of Christian leadership, we must study with diligence the life of that Leader of leaders, as clearly set forth in the Scriptures.

Hindrances to Devotional Bible Study.

Let us clear the ground, first of all, of that supposed hindrance — lack of time. In each country that we visit the Christian men and women claim that they are busier than those of any other country. There are many persons who conscientiously think they do not have half an hour a day to spend in Bible study. Let us suggest two ways of meeting this hindrance. There is time to do the will of God. Is it the will of God that I grow spiritually? Yes; for He does not wish me to become unspiritual or to stand still. Has a man ever grown spiritually apart from devotional Bible study? We have not found that man. Have you? Therefore,

there is time to study the Bible daily for our own spiritual growth. This, you say, is logical but theoretical. Well, then, will you for one month try the plan of spending the first half hour of the day in Bible study, and at the end of the time let us know whether it has interfered with your regular work or standing or efficiency? Hundreds of persons in different parts of the world have accepted this challenge. Thus far not one has reported that his work or standing has suffered in the least. On the other hand, many of them report that such study has enabled them to do more and better work. Is it fair, therefore, for any of us, without trying it, to say that this cannot be done?

Many conscientious Christians raise the question whether the reading of devotional books will not take the place of Bible study? We firmly believe that much of the lack of spiritual fiber among Christians today is due to a second-hand knowledge of the books of God. We would not be misunderstood, for we have derived too much benefit from such books as The Confessions of St Augustine, The Imitation of Christ by Thomas à Kempis, The Spiritual Letters of Fénelon, Baxter's Saints' Everlasting Rest, Jeremy Taylor's two spiritual classics, Law's Serious Call, and the more recent writings of Murray, Meyer, Moule, and Miss Havergal. The point is, why not go to first sources? One, in speaking of some of these writings, has said that in their most ap-

pealing tones they echo the voices of the Bible. After all, these things ought we to have done and not to have left the other undone.

Some people are hindered from studying the Bible devotionally because they are afraid to do so. One day while in India two young men said to us: "If we study the Bible in this way, we are afraid it will compel us to abandon our plan of entering Government service, and to devote ourselves to Christian work." A Mohammedan student in Egypt told us that, if he studied the Bible in this way, he would have to become a Christian. In another place a young man said it would make it necessary for him to give up a certain bad habit. Afraid of the light! How unscientific and unscholarly and cowardly! The reason why some do not study the Bible devotionally is because they have no suitable course of study to follow. This leads to the third point.

Suggested Courses of Devotional Study.

It would be an excellent thing if each one of us had studied the Bible as a whole and the different books composing it — their setting, construction, contents, and purpose. The more of such study we have the better use we can make of the Bible devotionally. But to complete such a scheme of study would require a lifetime. Fortunately it is not necessary to master the Bible critically before we begin to study it for daily spiritual profit.

The first suggested course would be the study of the more devotional books of the Bible. Some books of the Bible are better for devotional study than others. One of the foremost Bible students in Britain has said that for devotional purposes we should study first, foremost, and in this order: The Gospels, Colossians, Hebrews, Psalms, Isaiah, Deuteronomy. We submitted this list to one of the greatest devotional Bible students in America. He suggested only one change, namely, the placing of Deuteronomy before Isaiah. It seems to me that it would be well for Christian workers to place the Book of Acts after the Gospels. There are different methods of studying a book devotionally. The outline studies of St. Luke's Gospel and the Book of Acts by Robert E. Speer, and of St. John's Gospel by W. W. White, will be found specially suggestive and helpful on this point.

A second course, which has been followed with great profit by many, is "The Messages of the Epistles to Me." We are indebted for this method to Professor H. C. G. Moule, of Cambridge University (now Bishop of Durham). The outline which he recommends, and which may be followed in our study of any Epistle, is as follows:

1. Account of Christ: *a.* Human history; *b.* Divine history; *c.* Relation to His followers.

2. Account of the Christian life: *a.* Inward; *b.* Outward.

3. Account of the writer's life in Christ. We would suggest that at first the shorter epistles be taken.

The study of biographies has always proved stimulating to the spiritual life. What incentives to growth and endeavor would come from a close, practical study of a series of lives; *e. g.*, Joseph, Moses, Elijah, Daniel, John the Baptist, John, Peter, Stephen, and Paul? To guide us in such study we might take a simple outline like the following: a man's preparation for his life-work, qualifications, difficulties encountered, achievements, the secret of his enduring influence.

The topical study of the Bible is also very fruitful. Mr. Moody every year at Northfield urged the importance of devoting at least one month of Bible study to each of the great doctrines; for example, sin, the atonement, regeneration, faith. When in college two of us met for the study of the Bible. We wanted something to counteract the effect of sceptical philosophy. We took up the topic of the Holy Spirit, thinking we might finish it in three months. We spent the year upon it, and then felt that we had only opened the door. It proved, however, for us, to be the very unlocking of the Scriptures devotionally. Or we might take the topic prayer, or the Kingdom of God. It is not necessary to prolong the list.

The last course of study, and by far the most important, is the study of Jesus Christ. One

day in Edinburgh I asked Professor Drummond to name three courses of study which might be recommended to Christians for spiritual profit. After a few moments of thought he replied: "I would recommend that they study, first, the Life of Jesus Christ; secondly, the Life of Jesus Christ; and thirdly, the Life of Jesus Christ." He is right. It takes us to the very heart of the subject. Pre-eminent and essential for the spiritual life is the constant and devout study of Christ Himself. We would recommend the following six phases of the study of Christ: the character of Christ, the divinity of Christ, the teachings of Christ, the commands of Christ, Christ as a worker, Christ as a man of prayer.

When so many courses of study are mentioned there is danger that some of us will be confused, hesitate, and fail to take up any. It matters not so much what course we adopt. The main thing is that we decide upon some one course, and hold to it until it yields fruit in our lives and work.

The Manner of Devotional Bible Study.

1. Break up the subject to be studied into convenient or suitable daily subdivisions. In this way there will be some definite thing to take up each day, and valuable time will not be lost casting about to find out where to begin. If we are to really search the Scriptures, we must have things in mind for which we will search.

2. Be alone, if possible, while engaged in such

devotional study. This will often be difficult, but it is well worth the effort. We need to be where we can speak aloud to God. It is said that David Brainerd, in order to be alone for meditation upon the Word, was in the habit of committing to memory passages of Scripture, and then walking alone in the streets of New Haven, or in the neighboring fields, revolving these passages in his mind, applying them to his life, and conversing with God.

3. Keep in mind constantly the object of this kind of Bible study. It is to meet *my* spiritual need, not that of another. It is to enrich *my* life. It is to lift *my* ideals. It is to enable me to meet God and to hear His voice, to me, personally. We do well to remind ourselves of this object many times during our study.

4. Let there be resolute detachment of mind. Let us keep our thoughts from the thing which we have just been doing and from the thing which we mean to do next, and shut ourselves in alone with God and His Word. This is all the more important if our time be limited. If we have but half an hour to devote to such study each morning, we do not wish to spend half of it getting the mind fixed upon the subject.

5. Do not be diverted from the main purpose of the study. This is the peril of many Bible students. We come to something which, as Peter says, is hard to be understood, and are apt to think that that difficulty must be removed before

we can go further in our devotional study. Not so. Let us keep a paper on which we can note any difficulty that we come to, and at some subsequent time, as true scholars, let us seek to understand it. But let us not be cheated out of our daily spiritual food by mere intellectual curiosity, important as that is in its proper place.

6. Be thorough. We have far too much surface study of the Bible. Gold dust is often found on the surface, but as a rule we have to dig for the nuggets. We need to sink a shaft in the Scriptures in order to get at the deep things of God.

7. Meditate. Jeremiah best defines this process: "Thy words were found and I did eat them"; that is, I take these words into my mind, I store them in memory, I revolve them over and over again, I let them touch the springs of conscience, I let them find me, I let the will act upon them and apply them, I give them right of way in my life, I make them part of myself, I realize in actual experience that the words of Christ "are spirit and are life."

8. Record results. If you put down one point each day you will gain over three hundred points within the year. Most of us keep a financial record. All of us are in the habit of taking notes on what we hear men say. Is it not worth while to keep a careful record of God's dealings with us? It is my practice to carry slips of paper in the Bible constantly, on which to note such

points. I would rather part with the notes taken when listening to the most distinguished lecturers I have ever heard than with these little papers, which contain the record of my own soul struggles and of God's personal dealings with me.

The Spirit for Devotional Bible Study.

1. It should be an earnest or intense spirit. Ruskin says, "He who would understand a painting must give himself to it." He who would understand the deep things of God must give himself to them.

2. It must be a spirit of dependence upon the Holy Spirit. The spirit must interpret what the Spirit has inspired.

3. This suggests that it must be a prayerful spirit. George Müller, in writing of his experience in Bible study, says: "Spending three hours on my knees, I made such progress that I learned more in those three hours than in years before. From that time I became a lover of the Word of God." Does he mean that he learned more facts in three hours than in years before? No; he means that he spent enough time with the light of God's presence shed upon the Word to have revealed to him a secret which in turn unlocked other secrets, and thus to have opened before him a whole vista of truth. Many times we need to turn from the sacred pages with this prayer: "Open *Thou* mine eyes that I may behold *wondrous* things out of Thy law." We can

see the ordinary things without the help of God; but the unaided intellect, at its best, is absolutely unable to grasp the wondrous things of God.

4. It should be a childlike spirit. Bacon urges, "One must enter the kingdom of the natural sciences like a little child." Christ insisted, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven," still less understand its deep mysteries.

5. It should be an obedient spirit. We must be willing to let the Bible mean what it wants to mean. We must be willing to have our lives changed, cost what it may. "The organ of spiritual knowledge is an obedient spirit."

6. Finally, it should be a practical spirit. This term is best defined in the Scripture language, "All that the Lord hath spoken we will do." If we would determine at once that henceforth in our Bible study, as we come to commands which we have not obeyed, we would with God's help obey them; as we come to precepts which we have not heeded, we would in His strength heed them; as we see examples which we have not imitated, we would under the Spirit's influence imitate them — our lives would grow by leaps and bounds.

The Time for Devotional Bible Study.

1. Let it be a regular time. We should have a Median and Persian hour, that is, an unchangeable hour. It is a well-known law of psychology that to form a habit we must suffer no exceptions.

2. Let it be a daily time. Some of us may have a regular time, for example, once each week; but the daily plan is the more excellent one. The world pulls us daily. Satan spreads his snares for us more than once each day. Self asserts itself many times each day. Therefore we should fortify our lives spiritually at least once a day.

3. Let it be an unhurried time. We should give ourselves believing time. It takes time to become spiritual. Spirituality is not a matter of chance; it must be preceded by an adequate cause. If we would have large spiritual results in our lives, there must be sufficient spiritual causes. There is natural law in the spiritual world. But some one asks, How much time is unhurried time? I trust it will not mean less than half an hour each day for any of us. Yet more important than this, it means time enough to forget time; time enough to forget the watch and the clock; time enough to forget the thing we have been doing, and the thing we mean to do next; time enough to meet God, and to hear Him speaking to the depths of our lives. I am not pleading for a mere form, but for an actual, personal, daily meeting on the part of each soul with its God.

4. Let it be the very choicest time in the day. When is that? I used to think it was the last thing at night, but I found that usually the mind was tired or occupied with the many things which had taken place during the day. Then I tried the

middle of the day, but found it impossible to avoid interruptions at that time. At last, several years ago, when I was at Cambridge, I heard of the Morning Watch — the plan of spending the first half hour or first hour of the day alone with God — and adopted the plan. With some of you who are following the same plan, I firmly believe that it is the best time in the day. The mind is less occupied. The mind is, as a rule, clearer, and the memory more retentive. But forget these reasons if you choose. The whole case may be staked on this argument: it equips a man for the day's fight with self and sin and Satan. He does not wait until noon before he buckles on his armor. He does not wait until he has given way to temper, or to unkind words, or to unworthy thoughts, or to easily besetting sin, and then have his Bible study. He enters the day forewarned and forearmed. John Quincy Adams, President of the United States, noted in his journal, in connection with his custom of studying the Bible each morning, "It seems to me the most suitable manner of beginning the day." Lord Cairns, one of the busiest men in Great Britain, devoted the first hour and a half of every day to Bible study and secret prayer. We have all heard how Chinese Gordon, while in the Soudan, had a certain sign before his tent each morning which meant that he must be left alone. A friend recently saw his Bible in the Queen's apartments at Windsor, and told

me that the pages of that book, which was his companion in the morning watch, were so worn that one could scarcely read the print. He always reminds me of Sir Henry Havelock, who took care to be alone each morning to ponder some portion of the Bible. When on the heaviest marches it was determined to start at some earlier hour than that which he had fixed for his devotions, he arose quite in time to hold undisturbed his communion with God. Ruskin, in speaking to the students at Oxford, said, "Read your Bible, making it the first morning business of your life to understand some portion of it clearly, and your daily business to obey it in all that you do understand." Francke spent the first hour of every day in private devotions. Wesley, for the last forty years of his life, rose every morning at four o'clock, and devoted from one to two hours to devotional Bible study and prayer. Rutherford was accustomed to rise every morning at three o'clock, and the whole of the earlier hours of the day were spent by him in prayer and meditation and study. Greater than all, we have it on the best of evidence that Christ rose a great while before it was day to hold communion with God. What He found necessary or even desirable can we do without? Spirituality costs. Shall we pay what it costs?

IX

Things Which Make a Bible Class Effective

CLAYTON SEDGWICK COOPER

In this rapidly moving age, effectiveness is a universal test. Both the Church and the Bible must answer to the query: "Are you really worth while?" We may point vainly to great numerical advances and to excellently written annual reports unless the Bible class actually affects individuals for the betterment of their lives. Bible study must do something for the members of the class; otherwise, busy, practical Americans will have little interest in it.

An observance of successful Bible study reveals the necessity of at least some of the following features in every effective class:

A Teacher who is the Real Thing.

It may not be too often reiterated that character is caught, not taught. Some one has said that influence is a matter of suction. "I do not remember a thing the teacher said, but I do remember him," was a student's comment concerning a great Bible leader. An old lady in Dr. McCheyne's Church, in Scotland, said she had

rather see Dr. McCheyne walk from the door of the church into the pulpit than to hear any other man preach a sermon. The Bible class is not a mere academic lecture room. It is not a place for dispensing moral philosophy and "greatest happiness" principles. It is a place for the revealing of the purposes of God. Such revelation is not performed without great conviction on the part of the teacher. Bible study, if actual, affects motives, and motives are aroused only by men who believe things irresistibly. The man who faces weekly a group of students has one of the matchless opportunities of these times. This opportunity is something far higher and greater than passing on cheerful quotations and badly worn platitudes. The teacher's chance is to set the current of the soul toward God and the service of the hand toward brother man. Personal character is the greatest vehicle for truth. The teacher will be the only Bible many of his pupils will truly read. He can teach just so far as he truly is. If he is merely perfunctory or a professional religionist, alas for the class! The true teacher must declare war upon all inveracity and egotistical proclamations of goodness. He must be careful how he talks in terms beyond his own experience. His personal religion is his greatest asset. His sincerity, his reality, his genuineness must be so marked that unconsciously men are reminded of Him who said: "I am the Truth."

An Intelligent Outline.

Courses of Bible study thoughtfully arranged have assisted thousands of men in forming Bible study habits. Many people would study the Bible, but hardly know how. A Bible study course makes it necessary to begin somewhere, to continue, and to end somewhere. It necessitates systematic and thoughtful treatment of a particular subject or portion of the Word of God. It helps to make Bible truth cumulative and stimulative, and it relegates to the background mere hit-or-miss Bible reading. In this phase of education, the Bible should not be used as a fetich, but rather as a light to the mind as well as to the conscience and to the heart. "When the procession of your powers," says Phillips Brooks, "goes up to worship in the temple, leave not the noblest of them all behind to cook the dinner and to keep the house. Give your intelligence to God."

Certainly one of the things which must be present in an effective Bible class is a well-thought-out plan giving the entire subject a definite objective, and a constructive, intelligent method of arriving thereat.

Calmness.

Calmness must also be an attribute of the successful Bible class. Bible classes, like most boats, sail best on an even keel. The power of the leader and the members is revealed in quiet-

ness and self-control. The sense of hurry or the keeping of the eye always on the watch is prejudicial to well-poised thoughtfulness and sane discussion. The "inner light" and mind of the teacher is truly revealed in his manner. His attitude is contagious. He often becomes impressive in inverse ratio to his bluster and noisy arguments. Some teachers bring the spirit of peace and deliberation as they enter the room, so that the study can begin at once. Others storm in like a whirlwind, and true thoughtfulness and devotion must wait until things get quieted down.

Attention to Details.

A class secretary is usually necessary. The teacher should have something greater in his mind than roll calls of attendance, the opening and shutting of windows, and the passing of Bibles.

The real teacher must feel his truth so big within him that it necessarily fills his entire consciousness, else when it gets out it will not come hard and straight and powerful. But some one must get down to earth and look after the machinery, or the Bible class may be wrecked by inattention to details. A faithful secretary can well magnify his office by arranging exhibits of Bible literature, by following up through correspondence and personal calls delinquent members, and by keeping the leader informed of attendance, criticisms, and suggestions of need

gathered from the men in the class. The secretary can do many things not on the program, provided he be sensitive to conditions, tactful in emergencies, and keen to discern the signs of the times.

Prayer.

The spirit of prayerfulness is always an attendant of an effective Bible class. In a class where non-Christian men are present the teacher's statement that no man will be called upon for public prayer who has not been asked beforehand will often add to the ease of diffident members. The genuine prayer, however, both audible and in secret, is indispensable. The entire hour must be saturated with the spirit of prayer, if great results are to be attained. Men should be turned from their sins to accept Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour in our Bible classes. Sham lives of alleged Christians should be cut through by the sword of the Spirit. The peace of God should be realized in sore and troubled hearts. Such unusual events are fruits of the prayerful spirit. The disciples' hearts burned within them because Jesus Christ was near. The effective Bible class is an effective prayer meeting, even though no prayers are heard.

Naturalness.

Naturalness should characterize Bible study. Every man should be himself in tone, in manner,

in language, and in appearance. The influence of the Bible class should not be undercut by the use of traditional phrases from which all real meaning has long since departed. Nothing is more fatal to the vital current in the Bible class than cant or the semblance of professionalism; nothing is more winning than a perfectly natural and genuinely simple presentation of truth that is really believed.

Discussion.

Free discussion illuminates the Word of God. The Bible class is not a pulpit nor a lecture platform. It is rather a seminar, depending upon the original contribution of each member. Some one has described a successful Bible class as being similar to a relay race rather than a mile run. The teacher is the leader, not the preacher. Josh Billings defines a bore as the man who talks so much about *himself* that you cannot talk about *yourself*. The real leader should be more like a committee chairman whose business it is to guide the discussion as the presiding officer. He should strive to keep himself out of the light. The shadow of a man in the brook is fatal to good fishing.

To be sure, it is difficult to secure such freedom of discussion in large classes which form audiences. It is possible, however, to break such classes into smaller groups of ten or twelve men each where real Bible study and thoughtful ex-

change of ideas may be stimulated on the part of every man.

It should be remembered that the Bible class is for the sake of Bible study; that Bible study is not for the sake of the Bible class. The class hour should arouse men to a new interest in the Bible, and to the formation of a habit of personal Bible study. It will rarely do this if the men come in simply to listen to a sermonette on a particular Bible passage.

Dr. Holmes said: "I can tell you what I cannot tell myself." It is interesting to note the stimulation of thought which results from every member expressing and restating the truth in his own way. He is not only enabled to grasp new truth, but he is easily able to remember at least the points which he himself makes. Anyhow, we really know only what we can tell. The humblest man must be allowed his contribution because it is his own.

A question box and the assignment of particular topics may be helpful in arousing initiation and interest. If chapters and books are cited for reference, the teacher should always go over them with the student in advance to kindle his interest.

Discussion, however, should not become a debate or a controversy. Acrid argument never convinces. Hearts shut up when heads get hot, and when conversation gets beyond well-balanced and friendly discussion. Anything like strife or

self-assertion spoils the temple of Bible study. There should be instead some of that "mildness and sweet reasonableness" of Him who was meek and lowly in heart.

Central Thoughts.

Central thoughts should receive the accent. Not much time needs to be spent on the details of geography and exegesis. The *core* of the lesson must be pivotal and central. The great ideas should be driven home until they live and burn and will never be forgotten. The Bible class is the place for emphasizing the great affirmations of the Christian faith. It is the place for exalting our unities and minimizing our differences.

Reviewing.

Reviewing is constantly essential. Dr. Gregory affirms that the best teachers give one-third of their time to reviews. It is not what a man earns but what he keeps that constitutes his wealth. The review is the teacher's chance to make the Bible ideas immortal. It fixes and crystallizes. One of our scientists affirms that "reiteration" is the only method of establishing truth in "alien minds." Thoughtful reviews give perspective, proportion, and new sides to the subject. The good teacher, like the skillful lawyer, reaches his facts from every possible angle. The second inspection of truth brings us nearer the

heart of reality, while unessential details fall into their proper and subservient niches.

Sympathetic Imagination.

The Apostle Paul would say, "Look not every man on his own things but every man also on the things of others." The supreme and thrilling thought of the Bible leader lies in his realization that he has something tremendously worth while to do for other men. It is more than possessing knowledge of the Bible. It is far more than having a perfect pedagogical system. There must be the ability on the part of the teacher to get out of himself into the lives of the members of his class. He must create in himself conditions which belong to them. It is not enough for him to get the truth in his own mind and heart and to get it irresistibly; he must then travel back along the path up which he has come to return with the new disciple. This is no mean task swiftly to put one's self in the other man's place and to bear his burden. Professor Palmer calls it "the aptitude for vicariousness." It was the ideal Teacher's unique trait so to place Himself in the disciples' circumstances as to realize how His teaching must appear to the men hearing it for the first time. No Bible class will be truly effective unless this spirit of mingled sympathy and sacrifice unite in the life of the teacher.

Reserve of Knowledge.

Some one in every Bible class must have an accumulated wealth of information concerning the subject in hand if the class shall be effective. The leader of a Bible group needs to be a specialist in some department of knowledge related to his subject. To know one side of his subject even better than any one else in the class may know it, gives a teacher a certain prestige and makes him almost respected for certain things he does not know. A great teacher once said that he worked hardest upon things that he never said in class. The consciousness, however, that he had this reserve of actual knowledge to draw upon caused him to move about easily in his subject. He was not always teaching up to the very edge of his reserve. If, for example, a teacher has made a specialty in his study of the life of Christ, if he has fairly saturated his thought and imagination with the life and precepts of the great Teacher of Christianity, in a peculiar way this man acquires a competency in other realms of Bible teaching. A Bible class can never be effective through piety alone. The true teacher must love the Lord his God with all his *mind* as well as with all his soul.

Service.

Furthermore an effective Bible class is one that joins Bible truth and action. Bible study is not an end in itself. It is not for the sake of infor-

mation simply. Neither is it simply to give spiritual thrills and moral satisfactions or selfish happiness. A Bible class is for the sake of life and service. The Bible is a practical book because it treats of practice and of conduct. Just as truly as neither books nor sermons nor men abide unless they are serviceable, so true is it that no Bible class possesses lasting values unless it can relate men to tasks, to needs, to action. The real discovery of truth should never leave a man inert and passive and disinterested. He must act and react on what he receives, else the objective of the Bible class is lost. The Bible class is not simply a resort for curious, intellectual critics. It is rather a creative center of vital life. It should be a dynamic force impelling men toward new and splendid active ideals. The Leader of the group of twelve men in the first century toiled more than He taught.

Evangelism.

Christian evangelism should have its place in the Bible group. Mr. Moody used to say that no one expected to have any one converted on Sunday morning. We have far too little faith that the supernatural power of God shall be manifested in the Bible group. The drift of the present age, however, must bring us more and more to the Bible as the means of evangelism. The great mass meeting with its spectacular accompaniments is less and less capable of reaching

thoughtful men for the Church. The Bible class, with its intelligent, devotional, informal, and natural air, should be a place where God may find hearts responsive to His call. Almost everything depends upon the objective in the leader's mind. We have in mind a Bible class in which the leader was the means of leading nine of the ten non-Christian members to accept Christ as a personal Saviour. He had gathered these men into a little group with the distinct purpose and prayer that they might be led to know the Lord. A Bible class where the temper and disposition is Christ-like, where the treatment of sin is straight and sincere, and where the very Omnipotent Saviour is lifted up before the eyes of men is a means of evangelism second to none. "These are they that testify of me."

X

How to Make the Bible Real

HENRY CHURCHILL KING

EVERY scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness: that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work. — 2 Tim. 3:16, 17.

1. Make it unmistakably plain to yourself that the Bible teaches that it is itself *the* great means of grace. Mark 12:24; Acts 20:32; 2 Tim. 3:16, 17; John 17:17.

From whatever point of view one regards the Christian life, he must lay the strongest emphasis on the Word. It may be safely said that the growth of a Christian is, in the great majority of cases, quite exactly proportioned to the real applied knowledge of the Word of God. "Is it not for this cause that ye err, that ye know not the Scriptures nor the power of God?"

2. Treat it as you do other deep books. Apply the same method to it, and expect results on the same conditions. Do not be impatient. The one great reason why the Bible is not more real to

us is that we do not treat it as though it were real. We treat it as we do not expect to treat any other similar book.

If you go to it in this sensible fashion, then, you will wish to have the best translation, in the best form, and you will, therefore, use the *Revised Version,* both because it gives you the meaning more exactly, and because of its division into paragraphs. The "American Standard" edition is the best. And you will need a good-sized type which will make your reading easy, not difficult. It is very costly economy that keeps you to a fine print old version, though it be bound in morocco. Moulton's Modern Reader's Bible, simply because it prints the text as a modern book would be printed — especially in the Prophets — will be a great help to many. Fresh translations also, like The Twentieth Century New Testament, or Ballentine's The American Bible, have a real and large contribution to make. And paraphrases, like those in Sanders and Kent's series, The Messages of the Bible, bring the material before us in still another way.

This sensible looking at the Bible, also, will lead to another resolution: henceforth to use no language about the Book that does not have real meaning to you. You will not echo phrases, but you will think ideas.

Moreover you will understand at once that it is as absurd to expect large results from the

Bible, without spending *time* upon it, as from any other book. A little time, taken persistently every day, will accomplish much. Coupled with this, will come the twin conviction that so deep a book, treating of such profound themes, justly asks and requires not hearing or reading merely, but *study* — study such as students expect to put on their text-books. Therefore —

3. *Study* the Bible.

If going to it, in this sensible fashion, then, that it may be always able to give you fresh suggestions and not merely those received before. But another copy may well be marked freely; or you may use a note book continually with your study. For example, note by numbers the separate points made in a paragraph; find the prevailing thought in each paragraph and make a definite statement of it in the margin or in your note book; note the logical connections of the paragraphs with one another, and so get at the line of argument of a chapter; then connect the chapters similarly. Work out thus an analysis for the whole book, after having clearly stated its manifest purpose as disclosed in your study. It is often of decided value to write a paraphrase of a chapter — either expanded or abridged — for this compels you to rethink in new forms the thought of the chapter. This real thinking of the thoughts of the Bible must be the aim and justification of any method. For the same purpose it is often helpful to note a

recurrence of some dominant thought, or the piling up of motives in some exhortation. The prime thing is no set method, but a live attempt to master the thought of the author.

Looking at the Bible in this light, you will cease to depend on its unconscious influence, but you will seek definite intelligent impressions — some clear teachings; and you will take it for granted that some intellectual impression is to precede spiritual good. Therefore,

4. Study the Bible *sensibly*.

a. Don't take the poorest time in the day for it.

b. Remember the kind of book it is — a library of sixty-six books or pamphlets, on very different themes, the work of perhaps forty authors, through possibly 1600 years.

c. You will aim therefore especially, at the foundation and condition of every other method of study of it, to master its contents *book by book*. Make "book studies." Discover for each book its plan, its purpose, the principle upon which its material has been selected, its title, its main divisions, its complete analysis (after the fashion of those in the Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges), its place in the revelation of God, its connection with the other books. Don't be superficial. Ask for its great dominant thoughts rather than for its "keywords." You will thus be prepared to take a comprehensive view of all Scriptures, in the great divisions. This study of single books may begin almost any-

where with profit, but you may find it easiest to begin with some of the short Epistles.

d. Put the Psalms (which cover a period of perhaps 500 years) and the Prophecies, as far as possible, into their *historical setting*. They often gain greatly in vividness and power from a clear knowledge of these connections. George Adam Smith's The Book of the Twelve Prophets has a wonderful contribution to make in this respect to the understanding of the "Minor Prophets."

e. Consider the *character of the passage* under study. Do not make history into exhortation, nor poetry into prose, nor genealogies into prophecies. Study the history as history, yet as history written for a purpose, the statistics as statistics, the legislation as legislation. Do not be disappointed that the first chapter of Chronicles does not seem as rich in suggestion as the fourteenth of John. Consider the great variety of Scripture, and adapt your methods to its varying parts. Use your common sense, and call to your aid such helps as you would employ in the study of similar literature in other books. Notice *who is speaking* in the passage, and don't quote the devil, nor Job's comforters, for gospel truth. Note, too, the *circumstances and temperament* of each writer, so far as you can get at them.

f. Particularly remember that the Bible is not a collection of mottoes, from which any verse may be taken, to point a moral or adorn a tale;

and that this motto use has been one of the greatest hindrances to an intelligent and accurate knowledge of the Bible. Therefore,

5. Study the Bible *honestly*.

Consider carefully the immediate context; see that you are not putting on the words a meaning which they cannot bear in the connection. Be scrupulously honest in this. "Allow for yourself and your prejudices." Don't come to the Bible to read your ideas into it. Do not cultivate the fatal facility of deriving any number of morals from the same passage. Ask rather for the plain and simple meaning of the passage, avoiding "ingenious interpretations." Seek to discover by a careful study of the passage in its entirety, in its immediate context and in its setting in the book, what the manifest meaning and purpose of the writer was; and exalt *that* lesson, not any other. In many cases there is no lesson to be drawn from a number of verses; the complete narrative must be taken to give the ground for inferring the purpose of the writer.

6. Study the Bible *systematically*.

a. Not "hit or miss," a few verses here or there, anywhere as it happens. It is impossible that any comprehensive knowledge of the Bible should come to you in that way.

b. Not superstitiously, opening the Bible, as a book of magic, morning by morning, as though you had a promise that the book would open at the precise passage that you needed for the day.

Laziness and refusing to use one's intellect are no means of grace.

c. Not in constant repetition of certain favorite passages. Whole stretches of unexplored truth are before you. You have no right to limit yourself to a few chosen passages. Even these very passages suffer by such treatment.

7. Read *large portions* at a time, often. You can hardly know how the Bible really tastes, when you always read it in little bits. You could not enjoy Shakespeare or Scott or Gibbon so. You do not yet know the charm, the interest, the engrossing power of the Bible, if you have not read large sections of it at a single sitting — not so many set chapters to fulfill a duty, but a complete section, really to master the thought. Read one of Paul's letters entire, considering its circumstances, as you would any letter today, at a single sitting really to see what he says. Some Sunday afternoon, read a whole Gospel, not as a task, but for the sake of getting a single comprehensive view of Christ's life, trying to put yourself in the position of one reading the story for the first time. Make the Bible *live* for you. There are seventeen books of the New Testament, each of which can be read in seventeen minutes or less.

8. *a.* You may profitably study the Bible *topically,* trying first through your own knowledge, then through marginal references and a concordance, to gather the sweep of the Bible teaching on a single topic, like faith, the conditions

of peace, what it is to come to Christ, the proper use of money, and all practical questions concerning which you want instruction and guidance. This is to bring the Bible to bear very practically on life. One needs to be very careful, however, in this topical study, that he does not quote the Bible without discrimination, but that he takes full and honest account of the context of the passages, and of the entire historical setting. We have to do with a progressive revelation — culminating in Christ; and the character and teaching of Christ are our standard inside as well as outside the Bible.

b. It is also of great interest to study the Bible about *biographical centers.* Take the life of a single one of the Bible characters, like Moses, or Saul, or Samuel, or David (choosing preferably at the beginning of such studies a minor character, where the material is not too voluminous), and try to master all that the Bible gives about him; gather about him all related material, endeavor to understand his circumstances and his age, and put down in order all the separate facts concerning him so obtained directly or by side-lights. These facts now are to be made the basis of your inferences concerning the development and character of the man. Such a character study is not only interesting but has the most potent teaching for life.

c. For the sake of variety, it is sometimes useful to read a book with a single thought in

mind — what warnings has it, or what exhortations, what promises, what hints of further possibilities of the Christian life, what suggestions for Christian work, what revelation of God, etc.

d. But it must never be forgotten, that all fragmentary methods must be based on the comprehensive study of the books. Only so can one be sure of the legitimacy of the use of the detached verses.

9. Remember it is God's word to *you.* There is no other person in the world to whom it was sent more than to you.

10. It is God's *text-book* for the earthly training. It is not too much to say, that this book He has chosen out of all the earthly writings of the world, as that which especially concerns your life. This you need, this you are to study, this it is your duty to study. There is no rational reason why you should not come to have a wide and careful knowledge of it.

11. Here are *revelations.* You have wanted visions, some personal revelation, perhaps, giving reality to the spiritual life. A vision could do only one of two things for you that would be valuable, give you a new truth, or a fresh realization of an old truth. The Spirit waits to give you both these things in the Word. For,

12. *The Spirit speaks* through the Word. It is the meeting place of the soul and God. God would speak to you there. The Bible is the record of the pre-eminent meetings of God with

men, and in these each may share. Ask God to open your eyes, and to unstop your ears. Pray that the Spirit may bring home to you His own Word. It is directly through the Word that you are to expect that far the greater part of the work of the Spirit for you is to be wrought out. How can he take the things of Christ and show them unto you, except as you give him opportunity through your poring over Christ's life? Lord, speak to me, and then speak *through* me.

13. The Word is the greatest and most rational means to association with Christ — coming into understanding of His thoughts, feelings, purposes, acts, and into harmony with them, and thus being molded into His likeness by persistent association. Pore over the life of Christ to drink in its spirit. And so the Word becomes the greatest and most rational means to *personal acquaintance with God.* We may as certainly and truly come to know Him through His Word, as we may come to know a correspondent whom we have never seen through his letters. The one road to faith in God is knowledge of Him, and this knowledge is in His Word. "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ."

14. For the sake of those who are just beginning to read their Bible, the following passages may be suggested as of themselves particularly helpful, and as well suited to introduce them to the contents of the Bible, and so prepare the way

a little more easily, perhaps, for the use of the better methods suggested above: Matthew, chapters 5–7; Luke, chapters 12–15; John, chapters 1–3 and 13–17; Acts, chapter 2; Romans, chapters 8, 12; I Corinthians, chapters 13, 15; II Corinthians, chapter 4: 16 to chapter 7: 1; Ephesians; Philippians, chapters 3, 4; Colossians; I Thessalonians, chapter 5; I Timothy, chapter 4; II Timothy, chapter 2; James, chapters 1–3; I Peter; Revelation, chapters 1–3, 21, 22; Psalms 1, 19, 23, 25, 27, 40, 43, 46, 51, 63, 91, 103, 116, 121; Isaiah, chapters 40, 42, 53, 54.

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